

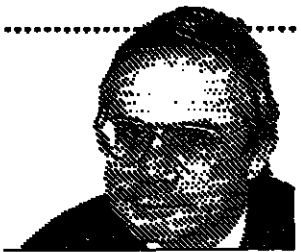


In G2 Europe today: Paul Theroux on VS Naipaul, that row and the legacy of their broken friendship

+ Martin Kettle on Chelsea Clinton + Ed Walker on gas poisoning + Education + Radio, TV and European Weather

Sketch

Lion, The Witch and The Wrekin



Simon Hoggart

THE HOUSE of Commons was not in a mood to hear any lectures. It never is. MPs are like students who refuse to get out of bed before noon. "I need no lectures from Professor Smith," they shout at friends who hang on the door.

During Home Office Questions the problem of corrupt councils came up. Clearly Doncaster council, which is currently the subject of four separate investigations.

Dennis Skinner said that "it ill behoves" (a thunderously un-Skinner like word) "a member of the Tory party when they will not tell on Lady Porter to pay back the £20 million that went missing at Westminster."

The minister, Paul Boateng, was as ponderous as only a barrister can be. "The day that they stand up and attack Lady Porter is the day that they can give us lectures about corruption."

There followed a bad-tempered spat about spending on the police. Sir Norman Fowler, the shadow home secretary, said that not enough was being spent.

Jack Straw said that the Tories spent too much time attacking the Government for spending too much money. Now they were accusing them of not spending enough.

"I am not going to take lectures from you on public spending," said Mr Fowler.

Mr Straw produced a visual aid to go with his lecture, a copy of Norman Fowler's memoirs, thought—and I hear Mr Fowler no ill-will—the dreariest of all the innumerable books about the Thatcher years.

(If the Alan Clark Diaries rated 10, Lady Thatcher's book would be 2, and the Fowler oeuvre would be a figure close to the point at which mercury freezes.)

"I have here a little-known work called Ministers Decide,

published at £18, knocked down to £2 and now at £1. "And still you didn't buy it!" shouted some churl from the back benches.

The Home Secretary produced a quote which appeared to disagree, just, with Mr Fowler's present position. Mr Fowler was affronted. "I am not prepared to take lectures from the right honourable gentleman," he declared.

The only topic we were interested in was General Pinochet, but the Speaker has ruled that he may not be mentioned—making the Commons the only place in the world where he may be discussed. Tory troublemakers were clearly anguished by this, and sat squirming on the benches like a haemorrhoid sufferer stranded on Filly Brig.

My mind began to drift. The next questioner was Judy Malabar, who sits in the Labour interest for the most beautifully named constituency in the country, Amber Valley. I imagine this as a magical, golden place, possibly painted by Samuel Palmer.

But then clearly there is a poet on the Boundary Commission who produces euphonious names for so many seats: Upper Nithsdale, Rowley Regis, Anniesland, Heston, and Lunsdale. This week marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of C S Lewis. You could populate a whole new set of Narnia books with the names of constituencies.

"Elmet the Dwarf stopped kettering his pots and pointed to a mound in the distance. That be Hodge Hill, home of my cousin Ervash," he told the children. "He will help you in your Quest. But you must avoid at all costs the trolls, Ochil and Ogmere, who live in the Doon Valley, and who hold the Power of Evil. They can send you to The Deepings, from which no human child has ever returned."

"But if you avoid them you can traverse Mole Valley on your way to Weaver Vale, the Land of Enchantment. Beware The Wrekin, the dragon with three heads! He can be defeated only by The Sword of Thurock. Fight him and win, and he will return forever to his dark, dank home: Great Grimby."

I woke up to hear Mr Fowler again trying to raise the subject of General Pinochet. Time for a cup of tea.

Veto will not be needed, says No 10, as four other states oppose harmonisation □ Architect of plan retreats

Britain winning EU tax fight

Martin Walker in Brussels and Michael White

THE Government was last night increasingly confident that Britain would be able to defend off ambitious tax reform proposals from Germany and the European Commission without jeopardising Tony Blair's hard-won Euro-friendly strategy by using the national veto.

Britain's battle against sweeping plans to harmonise European taxes notched up a significant victory yesterday when four other member states joined the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, in opposing a

tax which could devastate the City's lucrative Eurobond market.

As the 15 European Union finance ministers arrived in Brussels for their monthly meeting, Downing Street also moved to stress that Britain retained its tax veto and would use it "in the national interest."

What Mr Blair is again trying to do as he manoeuvres ahead of the promised referendum on eventual British membership of the single currency is to play for time, wooing Brussels with constructive policies to show he is a "good European", while keeping tabloid suspicions at bay at home.

With the Tory press in full

cry against renewed talk of harmonising VAT, excise duties and some taxes on business — just four weeks before the EU's single currency becomes reality in 11 states — the issue has become a political priority.

In a fresh initiative ahead of this month's EU summit in Vienna, the Prime Minister last night announced a joint employment initiative with Spain's conservative government of Jose Maria Aznar.

Britain's success on being able to manipulate its tax rates for social reasons, such as Mr Brown's politically-popular aid for pensioners' fuel bills, has now won support from France and Sweden.

In a further significant de-

velopment, the main architect of tax harmonisation plans in Brussels, the internal market commissioner Mario Monti, backed away from his initial grand design and agreed his objective "is most certainly not to harmonise national tax systems across the board."

It left last week's proposal by Germany's new Social Democrat finance minister, Oskar Lafontaine, to complete a new European tax code "by the end of June" looking increasingly hollow. There are only three proposals on the table for such a code.

The first, for an energy tax, is stalled. The second, for a tax on funds held in foreign bank accounts, faces growing opposition and the third, for a

code of conduct to stop different EU companies competing unfairly for foreign investment with tax benefits, is in British hands.

The process is chaired by the Treasury minister, Dawn Primarolo, whose report will not be complete until November next year.

That buys ministers time. But Mr Blair's spokesman insisted that London would retain its veto over future changes in tax rules.

He emphasised the Chancellor's Budget promise not to impose VAT on food, children's clothing, books, newspapers and public transport, all currently zero-rated, at least not in the 1997-2002 parliament.

Far more pressing is the plan to impose a 20 per cent "withholding tax" on funds held in foreign bank accounts, to prevent tax avoidance or evasion. The tax is aimed chiefly at French and German citizens using the secretive banking system in Luxembourg.

British officials in London and Brussels are scenting victory in their fight against key aspects of the Commission plan that could devastate the City's Eurobond market. Sweden, Denmark, Austria and the Netherlands also oppose the plan — an effective blocking minority.

Hugo Young, page 5; Leader comment, page 9



Peter Tatchell interrupting Dr Carey PHOTOGRAPH: ADRIAN ARBIB

Tatchell invokes Gandhi in court

Will Woodward

PETER TATCHELL, the gay rights campaigner, yesterday summoned up the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi, the suffragettes and anti-apartheid activists to fight a prosecution which could lead to him serving a two-month prison sentence for interrupting the Archbishop of Canterbury's Easter sermon.

Mr Tatchell is being prosecuted under the rarely used Ecclesiastical Courts Jurisdiction Act of 1860. Section II of the act states "any person who shall be guilty of riotous, violent or indecent behaviour in any cathedral church... shall be liable to penalty." Mr Tatchell could also be fined £200.

Canterbury magistrates court was told that on April 12, Mr Tatchell climbed into Dr George Carey's pulpit as the archbishop delivered his Easter Sunday sermon in Canterbury Cathedral. Mr Tatchell, joined by six other members of the lesbian and gay protest group Outrage!, condemned the archbishop's opposition to an equal age of consent and his refusal to support gay fostering.

Mr Tatchell was pulled away from the pulpit before completing his statement. In his defence, the gay rights campaigner insisted he had not intended to offend people with his "very fair and reasoned" protest.

"I think a lot of people

would have been very offended by realising that Dr Carey supported discrimination against gay people... I think people's human rights are more important than the maintenance of church service and ritual," he said.

Since Dr Carey became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1990, "he had always refused very reasonable requests to meet with lesbian and gay organisations to discuss our concerns," Mr Tatchell told the court.

During his pulpit protest he had not abused Dr Carey or

'Human rights are more important than maintenance of church service and ritual'

insulted the Church, and had not touched the archbishop.

The constitution of Outrage!, Mr Tatchell said, committed members to non-violent direct action. The movement modelled its methods on "Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for Indian independence, the methods used by the suffragettes, [and] the black civil rights movement in America. Those methods are our inspiration and model."

Prosecuting, Robert Montague said the protest was "inappropriate both as to time and place; it was unseemly; it



Peter Tatchell with gay rights protesters yesterday outside the court where he is being tried PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL HACKETT

Review

Rambling work lacks impact

Mic Moroney

Monsters Of Grace Belfast

WHILE his harshest critics (philistines all, of course) might dismiss Philip Glass's work as easy-listening for the stoned generation, the man certainly lapped up adulation at the Belfast Festival.

Over the past week he has given us a concert with the Ulster Orchestra, a piano recital, and the gigs with his ensemble, playing live film scores to Godfrey Reggio's iconic Koyaanisqatsi, Jean Cocteau's La Belle Et La Bête, and indeed his latest piece, Monsters Of Grace.

Billed as "the first digital opera in three dimensions" — and his first major collaboration with Robert Wilson since Einstein On The Beach in 1976 — Monsters Of Grace is a bemusing, low-key, meditative work.

Under Michael Riesman's musical direction, Glass's mostly electronic, 10-piece ensemble played under a large screen, on which Wilson's computer-generated imagery was projected. Cardboard spectacles with Polarised lenses were provided — like the red-green goggles for the 1960s B-movie, Creature From The Black Lagoon — to pop the images into dim, fuzzy 3D.

Typical of Wilson, the images — ponderously slow, animated Magrittes and storybook Wall-of-China landscapes — bore only an oblique connection to the libretto, a disembodied, Americanised prose translation of the love poetry of the 13th century Persian Sufi, Jalaluddin Rumi.

Glass took a familiar approach to the vocal lines, switching from urgent staccato to swaths of layered harmonies. And his singers are

very fine — soprano Marie Mascari, mezzo Alexandra Montano, and Glas's long-time baritone, Gregory Furnaghan.

For thematic texture Glass sampled Middle Eastern string instruments and percussion, using these for ornament or exotic melodic riffs, in between the trademark thundering machine-metronomic arpeggios.

Surprisingly, some of the synth sounds were tinny enough, such as the strings and brass voices, while the heavily miked flutes and sax/clarinet were more gratifying.

In Monsters Of Grace, Glass is tentatively looking for new departures from an oeuvre in which he has continually, voraciously recycled his ideas. Yet he seems unsure of which direction to turn without falling into other established idioms.

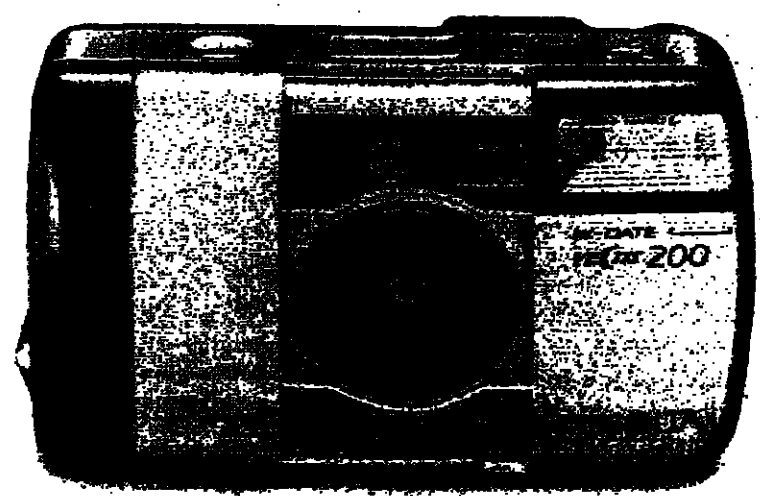
In the end his loose takes on Middle Eastern, Asian and Chinese melodic structures resolve into a rambling filmic mood work, which is hardly as catchy or memorable as the work which made him famous.

Still, if you float free of the score, it cushions the slow freefall of the imagery: Wilson's private language of almost pretty, narrative fragments which seems to stretch out from the screen into the auditorium.

It is significant that Glass likes to collaborate, as if to divert conscious attention from his musical scores, in which it is often difficult to find purchase mentally, other than in a kind of goofy transcendence.

As for he and Wilson working together again, Monsters Of Grace certainly lacks the radical impact of Einstein On The Beach. But back in 1976 we were all an awful lot younger.

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Where you rate in the new social order



Teachers get more class in social shake-up

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

TEACHERS, librarians and bank managers are up, but cooks, shop assistants and bricklayers are down in the most fundamental reclassification of British society for almost 50 years.

About a fifth of the working population will be shunted into a different slot on the social spectrum as a result of the official changes, announced yesterday by the Office for National Statistics. Many of these moving to the scale are public-sector workers and women.

Social workers, archivists and environmental health officers are among those who may be surprised to find themselves ranked alongside judges, architects and dentists as "higher professionals".

Plasterers, welders and hairdressers are among qualified tradespeople who may be equally surprised to find themselves grouped in "semi-routine occupations" along with care assistants, security guards and bus conductors.

One key factor in the changes is that no account has been taken of relative earnings. Instead, occupations have been sorted on the basis of form of remuneration — ranging from secure, salaried employment to short-term piecework — and promotion opportunities and autonomy. Classification has also been expanded to create a distinct grouping for the bulk of self-employed people



Geoffrey Forster... "It's nice to be considered important and valuable"

Moving up: the librarian

LIBRARIAN Geoffrey Forster, who looks after 130,000 books above Commercial Street in the centre of Leeds, is intrigued by his profession's climb to the heights of category 1(b), writes Martin Wainwright.

"You're crucial but we won't necessarily pay you for it," he summarises. Modest salary scales and a high graduate unemployment rate are a feature of the job. The challenge is a challenge even for a young

head librarian such as Geoffrey, aged 40, who says: "I did IT at library school 20 years ago, and it's changed completely since then." Computers sit alongside the handsomely bound books and spiral staircases.

Flexible management makes for another of the Government's new "satisfaction criteria" — a degree of autonomy in the job. Geoffrey says: "It's nice to be considered important and valuable."

Tory leader denies gay smear on Mandelson

Even MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

THE Conservative leader, William Hague, yesterday denied conducting a gay smear campaign against Peter Mandelson, the Trade and Industry Secretary, over his trip to Rio de Janeiro.

Mr Hague's office insisted that his Commons reference to "Lord Mandelson of Rio" had been a joke and had not been a reference to lurid allegations in the magazine *Punch* that Mr Mandelson had gone on a tour of Rio's sleazy gay haunts.

The Government remains convinced that the Tories have been mounting an orchestrated campaign against Mr Mandelson over the Rio visit. It also emerged last night that Mr Hague, in spite of his denial, had discussed the jibe in the context of the *Punch* allegations as recently as the weekend.

Ministers fear that innuendo could spiral out of control unless it can be brought to a quick stop.

Punch's current issue carries lengthy allegations that Mr Mandelson and the resident British Council director in Rio, Martin Dowle, had toured gay bars and clubs last July. Mr Dowle, in his first interview since the row began, told the Guardian yesterday that it was all untrue and accused Mr Hague of using "innuendo, lies and smears" to try to destroy Mr Mandelson.

Downing Street, anxious to see the issue killed off, refused to comment yesterday and directed journalists to put their questions to Mr Hague.

The Tory leader's spokesman dismissed the Government's reaction as "a ludicrous over-reaction". He insisted that Mr Hague had only been making a joke: it should be seen as an attack on Tony Blair's plans for the House of Lords.

Asked about Rio, Mr Hague's spokesman said the remark was not about the *Punch* allegations but had been meant to ridicule Mr Mandelson for going to Brazil at the taxpayers' expense to promote a book of political writing by Mr Blair.

But a transcript of an interview by Mr Hague on Alastair Stewart's GMTV programme suggests otherwise. Mr Stewart reminded Mr Hague only last Sunday that he had expressed distaste over gutter journalism and asked why he had made the "Lord Mandelson of Rio" remark.

Mr Hague replied: "Well, I was poking fun, as I like to do, at the Government with all their pomposity and their inability to laugh at themselves." He added that the reference to Rio had been because Mr Mandelson had been there recently: "I presume he has no need to be defensive about it."

Mr Stewart pushed him again: "It was only *Punch* magazine that made some allegations about what may have gone on when Mr Mandelson was on an official business trip in Rio de Janeiro. None of the national newspapers picked up on it. Why stoke it up now?"

Mr Hague replied: "It's only for him to worry about. If there's nothing to worry about, I'm allowed to poke fun at the Government and I will carry on doing so."

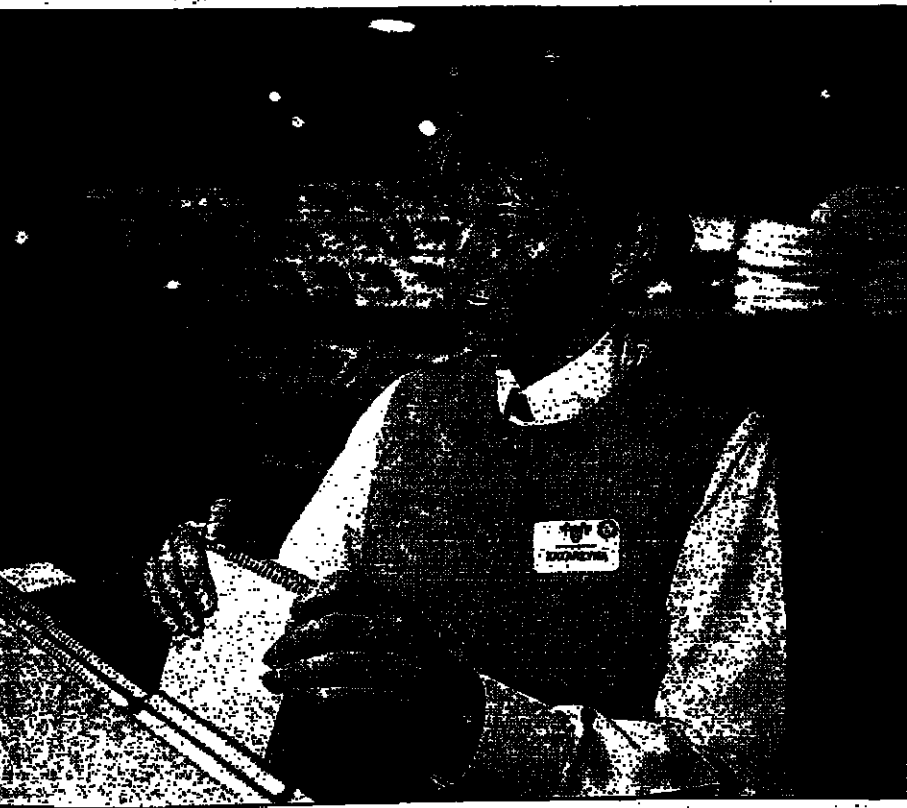
But Labour claims that a Tory aide was overheard boasting that Mr Hague's remark had been aimed at getting the issue into the political arena.

The Conservative MP for Buckingham, John Bercow, last week tabled a series of Commons questions to Mr Mandelson about the Rio trip, asking about expenses, his itinerary, people he had met, and what he had discussed with the British Council.

Dominic Midgeley, deputy editor of *Punch*, last night stood by the magazine's allegations. "It was brought to us by a very experienced journalist and we are confident he has got it right."

The magazine publishes its new issue tomorrow, which Mr Midgeley said would look at the way Mr Mandelson had dealt with the story in recent weeks.

Meanwhile, BBC newsreader Ed Stourton, mindful of a corporation gag on mentions of Mr Mandelson's sexuality, yesterday tried to stop the actor Nigel Hawthorne referring to him in an interview on the One O'Clock News about Oscar Wilde.



Katarzyna Horne behind the counter at the Royal Armouries

Moving down: the shop worker

KATARZYNA Horne's job in the Royal Armouries shop in Leeds does not quite fit the "semi-routine" label given by the Government's new system to shop assistants, dropping them into category 6 of the revised classification, writes Martin Wainwright.

Pay at £3.96 an hour is modest, particularly for a graduate such as Katarzyna, hours fluctuate according to customer flow, and promotion prospects are limited — but after nearly three years she still enjoys the job.

Katarzyna brought up in Poland, is still discovering the mysteries of British social classification, but has come to one conclusion. She says: "In Poland, I think, your education would be one of the main reasons for your place in a system like this, rather than so much depending on the job you do."

Stop moaning and get out, hospital tells healthy Pinochet

continued from page 1

house which will meet with his exacting standards and the security requirements of police.

The Chilean foreign minister, José Miguel Insulza, flew to Spain yesterday after a meeting with the Defence Secretary, George Robertson, who insisted that the decision on whether Gen Pinochet

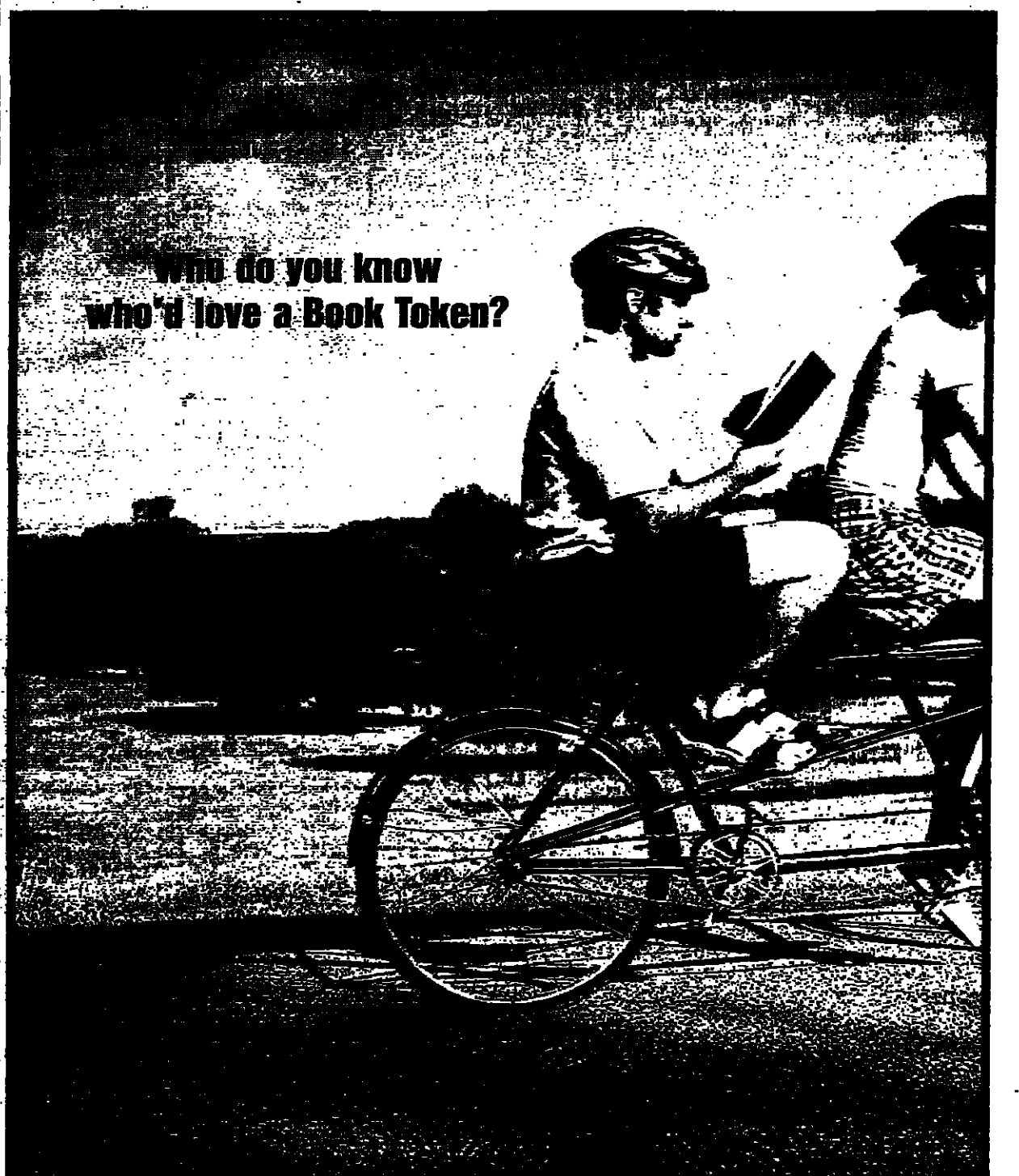
should be extradited was for the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, and "not a matter for collective ministerial discussion".

Whitehall and industry sources yesterday played down the threat to British weapons sales to Chile — now worth only about £1 million a year. British Aerospace said yesterday that there was no

suggestion that its joint venture with Farnat, a Chilean Government-owned company, to develop the Ravo artillery rocket system, was threatened.

The general's supporters, meanwhile, are revealing more details of secret intelligence co-operation between Britain and Chile during the Falklands war, to step up

pressure on the Government. Senator Evelyn Matthei, the daughter of Chile's air force commander during the Falklands war, revealed in a letter to a Sunday newspaper that Chilean radar and communications intelligence had kept the British fleet in the south Atlantic informed of Argentinian aircraft movements, via an RAF wing commander.



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BOOK TOKENS
THE GIFT OF READING

Dan Glaister reports on how the literary market is responding to the decision by the Oxford University Press to drop its 50 poets

Prosaic business of putting price on poetry

FOR sale: poets and their poems. As the fallout continues from last week's decision by the Oxford University Press to close its poetry list and drop its 50 poets, the market is responding quickly. Prices are cheap. It emerged yesterday. A job lot of the backlist of the 50 poets was reportedly being touted around for as little as £50,000. But as it became clear that few publishers would want to buy the rights to a poet's already published work without the right to publish new work, the backlist was split up.

Now, many of the better-known poets have signed with publishers who have a track record in poetry, such as Bloodaxe, Faber & Faber, and Picador. Craig Raine, D J Enright and

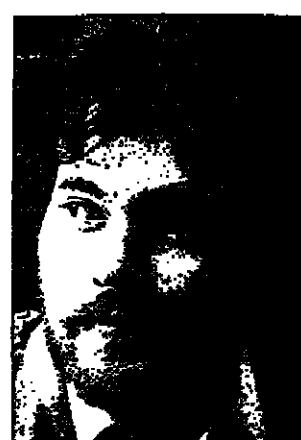


From left, Craig Raine, D J Enright, Sean O'Brien and Peter Porter

Sean O'Brien have found new homes. O'Brien, a past winner of the T S Eliot prize, was bitter. "I'm lucky in that I



have other options, but that isn't the case for everybody." He added: "They've distorted the historical record.



If the work of certain authors is lost for several years, that will be to the disadvantage of readers and scholars."



The result of the closure, said O'Brien, was an outbreak of bidding. "It's the ambulance-chasing approach to publishing."

Other publishers are aghast. Matthew Evans, chairman of Faber, suggested the decision dented the OUP's credibility. "How is it possible for the OUP to shoot itself in the head and both feet at the same time? For a company of the OUP's size and standing to take a decision like this is preposterous, and they've got the bad publicity they deserve. On paper the poetry section makes a loss but it takes up few resources and gives them great prestige."

A spokeswoman for the OUP thought it might be honouring contracts it had signed to publish some collections next year.

Among projects thought to be forthcoming are a 70th birthday tribute to Peter Porter, and Joy Shapcott's *My Life Asleep*. Shapcott's collection is al-

ready a strong contender for the T S Eliot prize, to be announced in February. It seems likely the collection could make the shortlist and attract publicity and extra sales without copies being available.

The lack of attention to the poetry list, say some observers, justifies OUP's decision to offload it. "What's the point of them having a poetry list and not doing it properly?" asked agent David Godwin. "The money's so piddling I'm sure the OUP would be glad to have someone take it off their hands."

OUP's poetry list, administered by a part-time editor, had an annual turnover of just £23,000. The company's annual turnover is £300 million. But the "piddling" nature of the money involved makes a

mockery of the OUP's reasons for closing the list. "There's no point in doing it unless it's going to allow a reasonable dividend to go back to the original owners, who are the university," said the OUP's Andrew Potter last week. The OUP might have done better to look at the perils involved in its English-as-a-foreign-language teaching texts, which incurred substantial losses as the "Asian flu" hit its key markets this year.

But the talk of profits and economic restructuring is of little consolation to the poets involved. D J Enright said: "I'm too old for this, it's so disheartening. It's the worst side of the modern world, this childish enthusiasm for the bottom line, that everything must pay its way."

Stars fly in for British theatre awards

Dan Glaister
Arts Correspondent

NICOLE Kidman, Kevin Spacey, Ewan McGregor... it was a normal day for British theatre yesterday as the cream of Hollywood turned up at the Savoy Hotel in London to collect and give out the prizes at the 1998 Evening Standard Theatre Awards.

Kidman, who appeared for £250 per week in the Donmar Warehouse's West End production of *The Blue Room*, flew in from New York to collect a special award in recognition of her performance, credited with revitalising the London theatre scene. The small-scale gamble paid off for Kidman, who received rave reviews. The New York transfer will reportedly net her £12,000 per week.

Spacey received the best actor award for his performance in *The Iceman Cometh*, which transferred from the Almeida to the Old Vic. Currently filming in Ireland, he sent a recorded message of thanks. The same production scooped the best director award for Howard Davies, while the Almeida's adventurous programming coupled with its policy of casting film stars such as Juliette Binoche and Liam Neeson, was recognised as artistic director Jonathan Kent received the outstanding achievement award. The award was presented by McGregor, who is currently appearing in *Little Malcolm And His Struggle Against The Eunuchs* at the Hampstead Theatre.

The best actress award went to Sinead Cusack for her performance in *Our Lady Of Sligo*. "It's one of the greatest parts ever given to an actor," she said, "one of those parts that you would kill for."

Other awards included: best play, *Michael Frayn* for *Copenhagen*; most promising playwright, Mark Ravenhill for *Handbag*; best musical, *Royal National Theatre's* production of *Oklahoma!*; best designer, Richard Hoover for another NT production, Tennessee Williams's *Not About Nightingales*.



Nicole Kidman, with Ewan McGregor, at the Savoy yesterday to receive her special award for her performance in *The Blue Room* at Donmar Warehouse. PHOTOGRAPH: NEIL MUMFORD

Managers under stress 'new workplace bullies'

Seamus Milne
Labour Editor

OVERWORKED and stressed managers are replacing bosses with personality defects as the main culprits in a spreading epidemic of workplace bullying, according to the man in charge of an employer and union-sponsored study of the problem to be launched today.

The first nationwide survey of its kind, undertaken by Manchester University and backed by the TUC and CBI, follows a string of recent research showing that bullying and abuse at work is becoming more widespread and costly.

"There has always been a small number of psychopathic bullies," Cary Cooper of the Manchester School of Management at the university's Institute of Science and Technology said yesterday. "These people were bullies in the playground and went on to become bullies at work, but what is new is the growing number of over-worked bullies, who suffer from stress, can't cope and so take their anger and frustration out on the people they work with."

The TUC estimates that 5 million people have been bullied at work — usually de-

Marie hated Mondays

MARIE, who is in her 30s, was bullied for most of her two and a half years as a regional account manager for a high street electronics retailer. "I absolutely dreaded Mondays. I couldn't sleep. I used to sweat on Sunday nights." Her sales manager, she remembers, undermined her authority constantly. "Whenever you approached her with a request, her initial response was always 'no'. When we'd go to meetings, she'd withhold information and come out with it at the meeting, making me look stupid."

"She'd swear at me, call me an idiot, and shout across the room: 'Get in my office now! She even threw the books at me out of temper. Sometimes she'd walk past

and poke me in a private place."

"If I complained, she'd say: 'What, haven't you got any sense of humour?' "She liked to belittle people and get their confidence — then suddenly turn on you. She knew she was bullying us, because when she felt she'd pushed things too far she'd turn on the charm and tell us we could take half days off."

Marie (which is not her real name) now works for BT. She says her tormentor was a very insecure person with no life other than work. She did make a formal complaint, but although there were promises of retraining — never discipline — nothing was ever done. "I blame the company more than her — she's still in the job today."

two thirds said they had witnessed or experienced bullying at work and three quarters of those said it had affected their physical or mental health through stress or depression.

The IPD says workplace bullying typically consists of unfair and excessive criticism, public insults, repeatedly changing or setting unrealistic work targets, undervaluing of work efforts, shouting and abusive behaviour. Physical intimidation was less common.

Professor Cooper's research, funded by the business-backed British Occupational Health Research Foundation, is aimed at identifying the scale of workplace bullying and the management styles that cause it, as well as assessing costs in terms of sickness, absenteeism, poor performance and reduced productivity.

His earlier work suggested that bullying accounted for between a third and a half of all stress-related sickness absence, and cost about £1.3 billion a year.

Prof Cooper said yesterday he believed the increase in workplace bullying was directly linked to the "downsizing" and job insecurity associated with the labour market of the 1990s. "Managers are giving vent to their frustrations," he said.

Gunman's killing of jeweller is linked to London gangland

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A JEWELLER shot dead on Friday is believed to be the latest victim of London's gangland battles.

Saul Solomon "Solly" Nahome, aged 48, is said to have been the financial adviser of London's leading crime family. He was approached by a gunman as he returned home to Finchley in outer London from his work in Hatton Garden in central London on Friday evening. He tried to run when he realised what was happening, but was shot repeatedly and died at the scene.

Mr Nahome, who was married and had one child, is understood to have given financial advice to the Adamsons, London's best-known crime family, based in Islington in inner London.

Mr Nahome was known to police, but last night detectives said they had an open mind on motives for the killing, and would comment on suggestions he was shot by rivals of the family or that police anticipated counter-strikes.

"There is no evidence to link this to any other murders," said a Metropolitan police spokesman. "It is too early to speculate."

Police want to talk to two men. One, described as black, was seen in the street where Mr Nahome was shot shortly before. The other, also black, was seen on a J reg black motorcycle with an orange stripe.

Tommy Adams was jailed this year for seven and a half years for a £2 million cannabis smuggling conspiracy. He was ordered to surrender a further £1 million or serve a another five years.

£10,000 reward offered - but not a whisker to be seen of Jeremy

A REWARD of £10,000 offered for the safe return of their cat has failed to unearth the pet, it emerged last night, writes Jamie Wilson.

Jeremy, a three-year-old Abyssinian, disappeared from his home in the village of Bosworth Green, Cheshire, two weeks ago. David and Linda Horobin treated the animal as a member of the family.

Mr Horobin, aged 48, has stuck more than 40 posters around the village and on one occasion walked nine miles along a canal shouting down rabbit holes.

Yesterday Jeremy's scratching pole, toys and four bowls of his favourite food were waiting on the other side of the cat flap he last used on November 16.

Mr Horobin believes the large brown cat, with a black stripe and tufts on his ears,

may have been frightened by something and run away across the fields.

The couple originally offered a reward of £1,000 but since it failed to produce any information they have upped the sum to £10,000.

But while the couple's phone has been ringing constantly with claims of sightings, the cat itself has yet to materialise.

Mrs Horobin said yesterday: "It is an awful lot of money but to us Jeremy is very special; he is like a little pal to us. If it means spending that sort of money to get Jeremy back then that is the all important issue to us. We are not really bothered about what other people might think."

"He's just a very precious little person to us. He is part of our lives. Unless you are an animal lover you would not understand."

Wilde can still smoke and joke even stone dead

Maev Kennedy

IT WAS the chain smoker's last hurrah: the actor, the artist and the dead man in his sarcophagus were all puffing away like Mount Etna.

A bronze and granite memorial statue of Oscar Wilde, who said the only thing worse than being talked about was

not being talked about, was unveiled yesterday in London.

The unsolemn ceremony was performed by his grandson Merlin Holland, great grandson Lidian Holland and the cigarette brandishing actor Stephen Fry in a crush of politicians, artists, lords, dames, biographers, actors and sponsors.

The statue by ardent smoker Maggi Hambling is called *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde*. It shows the writer and wit popping up out of his coffin, cigarette in hand. The silver letters at his toes read: "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars."

Actually, he is in Adelaide Street looking diagonally

across the Strand at Charing Cross station. The public can sit on his coffin and try to attract his attention. "Of course he'd like it," Ms Hambling said. "He's still talking a lot and smoking a lot; he'd have loved it."

Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, looked at smoke fogging the street and accused the sculptor of "a last fling

against the Government's policy on smoking."

He welcomed it as a fitting memorial "to a man who wrote like an angel and coined aphorisms which have not only lasted but are funny too."

Actors Judi Dench and Nigel Hawthorne then read a stream of aphorisms from A Woman of No Importance,

including: "One can survive anything now except death, and live down anything except a good reputation."

Most of the £175,000 cost was collected by public subscription, including a large donation from Mr Fry, star of the film *Wilde*.

Leader comment, page 9

One Tom Jones fan nabs another

A POLICE constable knew she had found his stolen stereo when he heard his favourite Tom Jones CD played by a man trying to sell him the stereo, a court was told yesterday.

PC Mark Ranger had answered a local newspaper advert offering a stereo for sale a matter of days after his was taken during a break-in at his home in Harborne in Birmingham in May.

Warren Westmoreland, aged 23, invited the West Midlands constable to come round to his home at Edgbaston in Birmingham and hear the stereo. He played the officer one of his stolen collection of Tom Jones CDs. PC Ranger told reporters after the raid: "That was the clincher. No-one else listens to Tom Jones."

At Stafford crown court Westmoreland admitted three charges of burglary and asked for 41 others to be taken into

consideration, and was yesterday jailed for five years.

Steven Redmond, prosecuting, told the court that Westmoreland had raided dozens of homes to fund an addiction to hard drugs.

Mr Redmond said: "Westmoreland advertised the stereo for sale in a local newspaper and Mr Ranger happened to see it, rang the contact number and went with police to the address."

The court heard PC Ranger identified the stereo and Westmoreland was arrested. His co-defendant, Raymond Phillips, a 58-year-old gambling addict from Winslow Green in Birmingham, pleaded guilty to two charges of burglary, including PC Ranger's.

He was jailed for two years. After the raid PC Ranger said: "When he played my Tom Jones CD that was the clincher. No-one else listens to Tom Jones."

Dounreay shutdown and clean-up will cost £4.5bn

Gerard Seenan

THE cost of dismantling and cleaning up the Dounreay nuclear plant will be £4.5 billion, about £90 for every person in Britain, it was admitted last night.

About 70 scientists and engineers will have to be recruited to implement plans to complete the oper-

ation following a scathing Health and Safety Executive report. But it will be done in half the time that had been suggested.

Responding to the 143 safety concerns raised by safety inspectors in September, John McKeown, chief executive of the UK Atomic Energy Authority, said the time scale of the decommissioning had been shortened to

reduce hazards to the workforce.

A series of blunders and mishaps at the Caithness plant this year prompted the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate to carry out an audit.

The inspectors were highly critical of the amount of high-level decision making that had been taken by private contractors. Roy Nelson, director

of Dounreay, said yesterday he accepted that too many senior scientists and engineers had been allowed to take early retirement deals, which had led to an increased use of the private sector and a shortage of management skills in some

of Dounreay plants. This had "led to the acceptance of poorer standards of plant condition than should have been the case".

Yesterday Dounreay managers made public their detailed response to the safety concerns raised in the report, which are expected to cost about £30 million to put right over the next three years. "We recognise that we must get better and we must improve our performance," Dr McKeown said.

Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar welcomed the

UKAEA's safety plan for Dounreay. "This is an encouraging first step in what will be a long journey to the standards expected of a modern nuclear licensee."

Lorraine Mann, of Scotland Against Nuclear Dumping, yesterday said: "I welcome this report as a great step forward, but I am concerned that reprocessing operations could restart at Dounreay."

صكزا من الاربعين

Social attitudes in Britain and Europe

Women still left to wash and iron

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

THE British are among the most liberal in Europe when it comes to sexual equality but it is still the woman who does the washing and ironing, according to a survey published today.

But while the widespread existence of the New Man, at least on the home front, is just a myth, it is no longer safe to assume that when a girl reaches adulthood she will be, first and foremost, a wife and mother.

For the British and European Social Attitudes Survey today confirms that only one in four people in Britain still cleave to the traditional view that it is "a man's job to earn money and a woman's job to look after the home and family".

It also shows that there is widespread support for the idea that a working mother can have just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work. Indeed, 50 per cent of people in Britain believe that family life does not suffer when the woman has a full time job.

The poll shows that bringing up children is highly valued in Britain, with 75 per cent saying it is one of life's greatest joys and they do not believe it interferes too much with the freedom of parents. At the same time only about one in 20 agree that people who have never had children lead "empty lives".

The survey shows that public acceptance of couples living together outside marriage is now almost universal in some European countries — well over 80 per cent in Sweden and the Netherlands. Opinion towards cohabiting couples is a little more resistant in Britain, with a 64 per cent rate, and in Ireland, only 50 per cent.

The meaning attached to marriage has also changed over the last 10 years with 70 per cent of the British believing in 1988 that people who wanted children should get married first. Now, only 57

per cent take that view — a fall of 13 per cent.

But while more women are going out to work and attitudes to some aspects of family life are on the move, what happens in the home has been much slower to change.

In the great majority of households across the European Union most domestic chores, such as the washing and ironing, and caring for the sick, are still very much women's work. Men do small repairs around the house.

This is the case in nearly eight out of 10 British homes, and in nearly nine out of 10 German and Dutch households. This is so consistent across Europe that some might assume there was a "whiter than white" female gene, the authors say.

The only variation to this pattern came in households where the women are earning more than their male partners. But even in 63 per cent of these households in Britain women usually do the laundry compared with 83 per cent where the man is the main breadwinner.

"Social commentators who argue that traditional roles have been overturned and we live in an age of individualism with both men and women putting career interests first, should look closely at these indicators of public opinion," the authors say.

"The British public are among the more liberal in their views on gender roles, but they can hardly be said to have abandoned traditional views. Although the trend is clearly one of increasing support for less traditional roles over time, the change in attitudes is really quite slow."

They say one explanation for this is the generation gap in Britain which is much wider than in other European countries. The older generation in Britain holds the most traditional views in Europe on women and the family while the younger generation is amongst the most egalitarian. "It is clear age matters on many of these attitudes."

British — and European — Social Attitudes: how Britain differs, Ashgate Publishing, £25.00



A woman's role... traditional attitudes are changing, but slowly, a survey has found, and New Man is just a myth

Medical colleges 'cosy clubs'

Sarah Boseley
Health Correspondent

THE medical royal colleges are "toothless tigers" — cosy clubs discreetly promoting the interests of doctors while claiming to protect the public against bad and incompetent practice, says the president of one of them today in a devastating indictment of the vested interests in the ancient institutions.

While there have been some criticisms of the colleges in recent months, this gloves-off attack on their failings is remarkable because it comes from within, in an editorial by the president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, Robert Kendell, in the monthly *Psychiatric Bulletin*.

In a series of medical scandals over the past five or six years, incompetent doctors have been exposed to the glare of publicity, ending in the "awful saga" of the unnecessary deaths of babies at the hands of the Bristol children's heart surgeons, says Dr Kendell.

Often other people in the medical profession could have stopped tragedies happening. "Although the incompetence was often well known to, or at least strongly suspected by, close colleagues, nothing was done until the harsh glare of publicity made intervention unavoidable," he writes.

The scandals have not merely shaken the confidence of the public in the medical profession and its self-regulating disciplinary body, the General Medical Council, it has also, he says, exposed the limitations of those self-proclaimed guardians of high clinical standards, the medical royal colleges.

Until recently, he says, "the position of the colleges was unassailable" however much their power and influence was resented, but no longer it has become clear that passing the college's rigorous exam for membership, which brings specialist status after long postgraduate training at the age of, say, 32, does not guarantee the doctor will remain competent for the next 22 years.

He accuses the colleges of lacking "the power and perhaps the stomach to discipline those senior members of their fraternity who are no longer functioning competently".

The colleges call themselves the guardians of high standards, but once a doctor is a member or a fellow of the college, all the college can do to try to keep standards high is issue guidelines that doctors do not have to stick to. In practice, Dr Kendell says, the college's power is "restricted to exhortation".

None of the great scandals has as yet involved psychiatry, he says, perhaps because it is not easy to detect incompetence in psychiatric practice, unlike in surgery.

But the inability of his own royal college to enforce high standards in psychiatry has been brought to light by poor standards in electro-convulsive therapy, he says.

ECT — electric shock treatment which alters chemical messages in the brain — is highly controversial, he acknowledges, but the college believes it can help alleviate severe depression. Its attempts to persuade the public of the appropriateness of ECT in some cases is not helped, he says, by the bad practice that surveys by the college have detected.

In the past 20 years the college has conducted three audits "and each of these has revealed serious deficiencies in the supervision of ECT clinics, in the training of junior doctors who usually administer the treatment and in the equipment used". Even the latest, two years ago, found that only one third of ECT clinics matched up to the standards set in college guidelines.

"Neither consultants nor their employers need pay any attention to the colleges' statements about clinical standards or minimum staffing levels if they do not wish to," he writes. "Even the ultimate

'In the past the colleges have been able to have it both ways: to pose as the guardians of clinical standards, and to be clubs which promote the interests of their members. This will no longer be possible'

mate and rarely used sanction of expulsion from membership or fellowship is little more than a symbolic gesture."

The future of the Royal Colleges lies down one of two roads, he says. One is to retreat into postgraduate training and abandon all pretence of guarding standards, in which case their power and influence would rapidly wane.

"They are already widely regarded, even by some of their own members and fellows, as rather pompous, self-satisfied and inordinately wealthy organisations with arcane rituals, fancy gowns and a surfeit of elaborate dinners and ponderous speeches. This unattractive image would loom ever larger in the public consciousness with every new revelation of consultant incompetence."

The alternative is to nail their colours to the mast and commit themselves to upholding standards by forging an alliance either with the GMC or with the NHS employers. That would mean breaking with the past and being willing to criticise their own members and fellows.

"In the past the colleges have been able to have it both ways: to pose as and to regard themselves as the guardians of clinical standards, and simultaneously to be cosy clubs which discreetly promote the interests of their own members and fellows."

"This is no longer going to be possible. The colleges have to decide, explicitly and publicly, whether when a conflict arises they exist to further the interests of patients or the interests of doctors."

Young people 'are careless about Aids'

Sarah Boseley
Health Correspondent

YOUNG people have become careless of the risk of Aids and prefer to forget about a condom when having sex, a report out today for World Aids Day says.

Teenagers told the Brook Advisory Centres in a study that condoms were a nuisance to be avoided. Most had never or rarely used them. Even then, they did not have HIV in mind but the risks of pregnancy.

A separate survey by the Health Education Authority found that one in six youngsters was dangerously ill informed, believing that the new drugs that keep the virus in check mean it is no longer transmissible.

The findings were released as Tessa Jowell, Minister for Public Health, appealed to

pregnant women to have HIV tests before giving birth. The way a baby with an HIV positive mother is delivered and whether she breastfeeds can influence the child's chances of infection.

"Having the courage to opt for an HIV test is an important first step in preventing babies being born with HIV," Ms Jowell said. Only 30 per cent of women who are HIV positive know they are infected.

The Brook survey looked at the attitudes towards safe sex of small groups of teenagers. It found that boys were particularly promiscuous and willing to take risks with HIV in the belief that nothing would happen to them. A group of 17 and 18-year-old boys stated they wanted "as much sex as possible" but would only think of using condoms if the girl was not on the contraceptive pill. They appeared to

think that most girls were on the pill, which was another misapprehension.

Only 25 per cent of 16 and 17-year-old girls and 37 per cent of 18 and 19-year-olds are on the pill.

Girls aged 17 and 18, in long-term relationships, were just as unconcerned about Aids. Most were on the pill before they met their boyfriends and did not use a condom for HIV protection when the sexual relationship began. They knew of the dangers of HIV, they said, but did not even consider them when deciding what form of contraception to use.

The HEA found that 16 per cent of 200 people aged 16 to 24 thought that the new drugs which have dramatically cut the death toll from Aids in the UK also prevented the virus from being passed on. A further 13 per cent did not know whether they did.

Wogan and BBC get set to work off Christmas flab

Janine Gibson
Media Correspondent

THE BBC will launch its biggest health campaign in January, to work off the nation's Christmas excesses.

Fighting Fat, Fighting Fit will run through the month on BBC1, BBC2 and BBC radio networks as celebrities and members of the public lose weight together.

According to BBC research, more than one in two Britons is overweight, and obesity among children has doubled in 10 years. As well as documentaries looking at diet, fitness and body image, the BBC has roped in stars from Radio 2, including Terry Wogan, and Michael Parkinson, to fight the flab.

Peter Salmon, controller of BBC1, said yesterday: "It's about saying 'Christmas is

over, now put down the chocolates'. Unveiling BBC1's £125 million winter 1999 schedule, he emphasised the need for contemporary drama on the channel, with 70 hours of new material. A clutch of new pre-watershed series with familiar faces are the result of a year's development of returnable drama series for the BBC. The corporation has long envied the consistent success of ITV shows such as *Heartbeat* and *London's Burning*. Three of the new series, *Sunburn*, *Holly City* and *Harbour Lights*, are vehicles for former soap stars and aim to attract the soaps' audience.

Sunburn has Michelle Collins (*EastEnders'* Cindy Beale) as a holiday rep, *Holly City* features Michael French (*EastEnders'* David Wicks) and *Coronation Street's* Angela Griffiths, and *Harbour Lights* was written for Nick

Berry, who was discovered by *EastEnders'* Mal Young, BBC head of drama series, and a former Brookside producer, said: "Soap stars are versatile, hard working and can act, and there's a high recognition factor. I tend to look at the soaps for actors, because it's the best breeding ground for talent."

Mr Young is working on developing post-watershed drama series to fit into the 8.30pm and 10.00pm slots next autumn. He said the shows were crucial "to compete with whatever ITV puts in to replace *News at Ten* and give viewers a real choice".

The BBC has signed contracts with Warren Clarke of the *Daniel and Pascoe* detective series, and Pauline Quirke and Linda Robson of *The Birds of a Feather* comedy show, to keep them on BBC1 and develop drama series for them, he said.

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Zaimur Zakaria, defence lawyer for Malaysia's sacked deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim, waves at the high court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. He was sentenced to three years' jail for contempt of court in a case that has raised grave concern about the rule of law

Anwar lawyer faces jail

John Gittings in Hong Kong

MALAYSIA'S rule of law was in crisis yesterday after a lawyer defending the sacked deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim was sentenced for contempt of court and accused of submitting an affidavit from his client claiming that two prosecutors had abused their position. Mr Anwar said they wanted a friend of his to implicate him falsely in illegal

sex acts with "various married and unmarried women". But Judge Augustine Paul said the affidavit was "an interference with the course of justice". He sentenced Mr Zaimur to three months in jail without allowing the defence to argue its claim.

This sentence was later stayed by the appeal court until Friday so that Mr Zaimur could appeal. Mr Anwar turned to the public gallery and said: "Where is the justice now?" The British barrister Charles Flint QC, observing the Anwar trial for the English Bar human rights committee, said yesterday's proceedings "raise grave concern for the rule of law".

He said: "It appears to be an extreme use of the powers to punish for contempt of court,

which will have the effect of intimidating lawyers for the defence."

The case of Mr Anwar's friend Nallakuruppan (known as Nalla) has already caused legal disquiet because he faces a mandatory death penalty for what is normally a technical offence involving a permit for firearms. Human rights observers regard the case as prima facie evidence that the law is being manipulated for political ends.

The prosecutors Abdul Gani Patai and Azhar Mohamed are accused by defence lawyers of suggesting the death penalty could be dropped if Nalla testified on Mr Anwar's alleged sexual affairs. A book circulated by Mr Anwar's political enemies claimed Nalla had set up sexual assignations for him.

When the police came to interrogate Nalla, they found bullets in his safe for which he did not have a permit. He was charged under the Internal Security Act — aimed at communist terrorism in the 1950s — rather than the Firearms Act, which carries a lesser penalty.

Nalla's chief defence counsel, Manjeet Singh, has made a statutory declaration — the basis for Mr Anwar's affidavit — claiming the prosecutors put forward the deal. Judge Paul said the affidavit was a slur on the attorney-general, Mohd Abdullah. He issued an arrest warrant for Mr Manjeet to appear before him for contempt.

A spokesperson for Amnesty International said Nalla had been named as a possible prisoner of conscience.

Islamic leader's claim of support angers military

Turkish generals warn politicians

Chris Morris in Ankara

TURKEY'S military high command warned the country's squabbling politicians yesterday not to make statements which could draw the armed forces into politics.

Turkey is looking for a new government, after the minority coalition collapsed last week under the weight of corruption allegations.

A brief statement issued by the general staff said politicians must act with great care during the negotiations to form a new government and "avoid saying anything which could get the armed forces involved in politics".

Although it launched three coups between 1960 and 1980, the military now prefers to work behind the scenes. On the rare occasions that it makes public pronouncements people take notice.

This one may have warned people not to speculate on a political role for the armed forces, but it is also a reminder of the real source of much of Turkey's political power.

It implied that the military does not favour any particular political party, an apparent reference to comments attributed to the leader of the Islamist Virtue Party, Recai Kutan, who suggested that the military would not stand in the way of a government formed by his party.

Virtue is the largest party in parliament and, according to convention, Mr Kutan should be given the first chance to take the reins of power.

It is common knowledge, however, that the military high command distrusts the Islamist movement. It takes extremely seriously its role as the guardian of Turkey's strict secular system.

The problem facing the military is that Virtue could do well if an election is held next year. Most political parties favour early elections, and

The statement was a reminder of the source of Turkey's political power

parliament has set a date in April, but the military is thought to favour postponing elections until 2000.

It is frustrated by the inability of Turkey's secular parties, who won more than three quarters of the vote at the last election, to form an effective government. A delayed vote could allow time for reform of the electoral system, in an attempt to create a clearer secular majority in parliament.

There has been intense speculation about the possible composition of a new gov-

ernment. One option is for the two main centre-right parties, led by the outgoing prime minister, Mesut Yilmaz, and the former prime minister Tansu Ciller, to sink their differences.

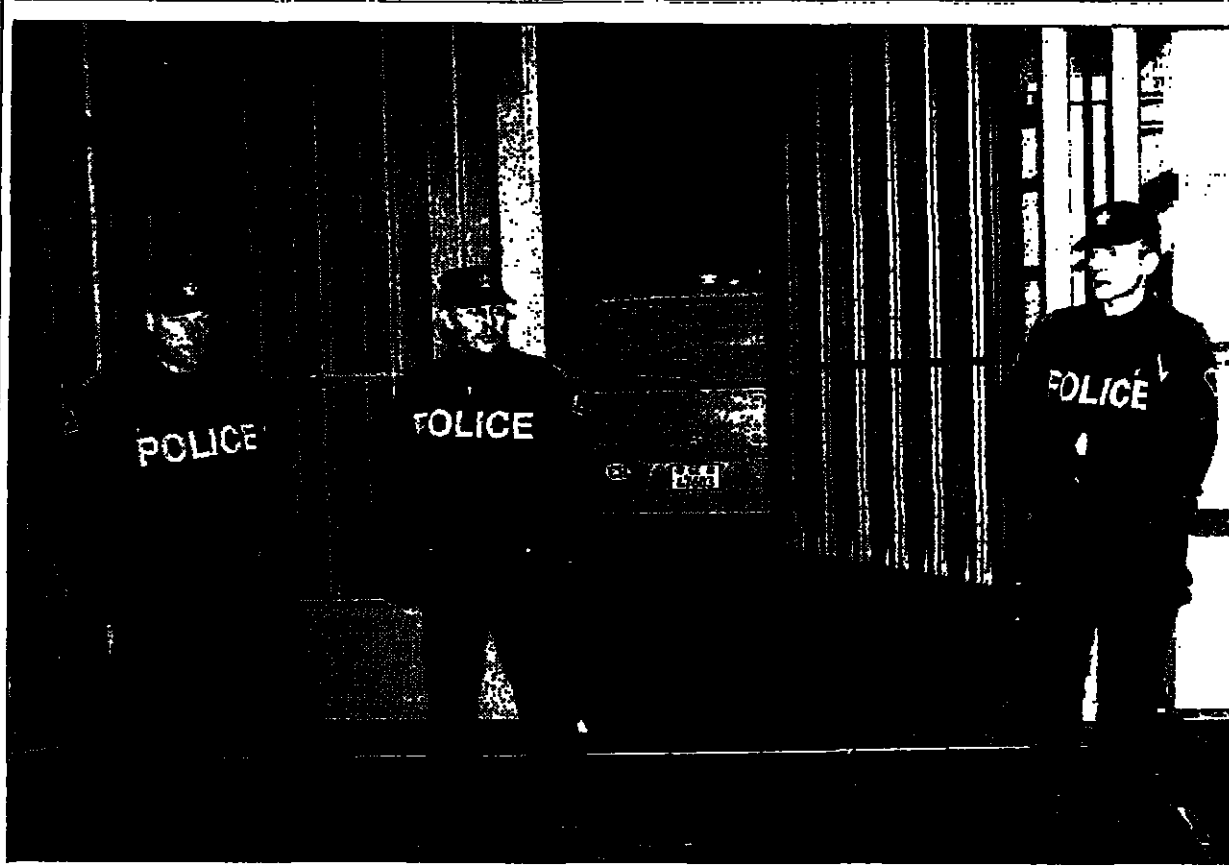
An earlier agreement collapsed acrimoniously. Secular party leaders may interpret the military statement as a warning that they should not seek a temporary alliance with Virtue, or offer the Islamists any concessions in order to form a new government.

Military pressure behind the scenes was instrumental in forcing Virtue's predecessor, the Welfare Party, out of government last year. The fall of Welfare, which was subsequently closed down by a court order, became known as a "soft coup".

That is why the military's statement that it does not want a political role is disingenuous: it already has one. It is at the centre of many political calculations as negotiations continue on how to form a new government.

No one expects the tanks to role down the streets anymore, but most Turks accept that the generals will continue to exercise decisive political influence.

The politicised role of the military is one of the issues on which the European Union insists that progress must be made before Turkey can begin EU membership negotiations.



Geneva police yesterday guarding the Palais de Justice in the city

PHOTOGRAPH: DONALD STAMFILL/MORVAN

Swiss put Russian 'mafia boss' on trial

Peter Capella in Geneva

A RUSSIAN businessman and alleged mafia boss has gone on trial in Geneva, under conditions of unprecedented security for the first case of its kind in Western Europe.

Sergei Mikhailov, nicknamed "Mikhas", is accused of running a leading crime syndicate based in the Moscow suburb of Solntsevo since the 1980s.

The "Solntsevskaya" allegedly specialises in racketeering, prostitution and drug trafficking and is reported to have ties with the Moscow authorities.

The case has drawn the attention of investigators in Austria, Belgium, Israel and the United States. The Swiss police estimate that the Rus-

sian mafia has laundered about \$40 billion in Switzerland in the past 10 years.

The main charge against Mr Mikhailov is based on a law introduced in 1994 which allows magistrates to prosecute members of a criminal organisation inside or outside the country — a charge which is very hard to prove. Prosecutors in Geneva complained that they did not have enough resources for their investigations and were forced to drop another charge for lack of evidence.

About \$2 million held by the 40-year-old businessman in Swiss bank accounts has been frozen since he was arrested at Geneva airport in October 1998.

Mr Mikhailov invested heavily in local companies after he bought a villa near Geneva in 1995. The police admit that most of his Swiss

business dealings are legitimate.

Mr Mikhailov also faces charges of forgery and breaching a law that restricts property ownership by foreigners. He denies being linked to the mafia, and his lawyers say he is the victim of a smear campaign by business rivals.

The presiding judge, Antoinette Stalder, overruled a series of procedural objections yesterday by the defence lawyers, who claimed that Mr Mikhailov's right to a fair trial was being jeopardised by biased press reports and leaks from the local prosecutor's office.

Part of the evidence against Mr Mikhailov is based on a call made on the tapped telephone at his Swiss home, in which police say he introduced himself to a rival as the "number one, number two, in

Solntsevo". One of Mr Mikhailov's Swiss lawyers was arrested earlier this year after he was caught trying to smuggle letters from his client out of prison.

Chief prosecutor Jean-Louis Crochet produced evidence in court yesterday to show that last month Mr Mikhailov's Swiss defence team passed on prosecution documents to a Moscow lawyer allegedly working for Solntsevskaya.

Several prosecution witnesses and their families are under police protection in Switzerland and the United States and will give evidence in court through a closed circuit video system to protect their identities.

In July 1997 Vadim Rozenbaum, a former business associate of Mr Mikhailov, was shot dead in his home in the Netherlands. He was one of the main witnesses when Mr Mikhailov was arrested for extortion in Moscow nine years ago.

Mr Mikhailov was released 19 months later after several witnesses recanted.

A senior Russian investigator and FBI detectives are expected to give evidence in the next two weeks.

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Italian confesses to killing family

Phillip Willan in Rome

THE mysterious disappearance of an Italian family of four appeared to have been resolved yesterday by Ferdinando Carretta's admission that he had murdered his parents and his younger brother.

Mr Carretta, aged 36, who had lived in hiding in London since his family vanished nine years ago, was arrested on Sunday on charges of multiple murder, concealment of corpses and the illegal possession of a firearm.

His lawyer, Filippi Dinacci, said yesterday: "Ferdinando is reliving his human drama from a decade ago. He came back because he wanted to free himself from an oppressive psychological burden."

He said Mr Carretta had planned to kill only his father, but was carried away and shot his mother and brother too, with a pistol he had bought six months earlier. He had resented his father for several years, the lawyer said.

"My parents were splendid. I was the one who had problems and who isolated myself from them," Mr Carretta told investigators.

Mr Dinacci said his client confessed everything to magistrates in Parma in northern Italy. He added that he showed signs of mental instability.

He is reported to have told the police that he buried the bodies of his father Giuseppe, his mother Maria and his brother Nicola in waste ground outside Parma.

The investigators went with him to the site yesterday, but faced a difficult hunt for the bodies: the area contains several large rubbish tips and has been flooded several times.

Mr Carretta was identified in London last month after being stopped by police for a traffic offence. He had been living in north London and working as a motorbike dispatch rider.

"He couldn't wait to confess," Vittorio Zancchielli, the preliminary enquiries judge, said. "His real target was his father... It was a situation of authentic hatred."



Ferdinando Carretta: Deep resentment towards father

Comment

Diary

Simon Bowers

A LREADY the parliamentary prospects for Gordon Brown's economic advisor Ed Balls look all but dashed after a few unhelpful remarks over the weekend from backbencher Bill O'Brien. Ed, reports the Sunday Times, having recently attended a number of high-profile local events in Bill's Nottingham constituency, is set to be parachuted into the seat — by happy coincidence next door to that of his MP wife, Yvette Cooper. It's a cosy picture, spoilt only by Bill, the 69-year-old curiously incumbent, who has told Ed straight: "There is no vacancy as I intend to go on." Even adding: "When we do eventually get a new MP, I think it will be a local trade unionist rather than someone whose background is as a researcher." Tough words, Bill, and you may soon be eating them. While some will only recognise Ed for his continuing efforts to sell off parts of the Post Office, tomorrow the Diary begins its campaign to highlight his untiring northern, trade unionist credentials. We'll see you in the House yet, Ed.

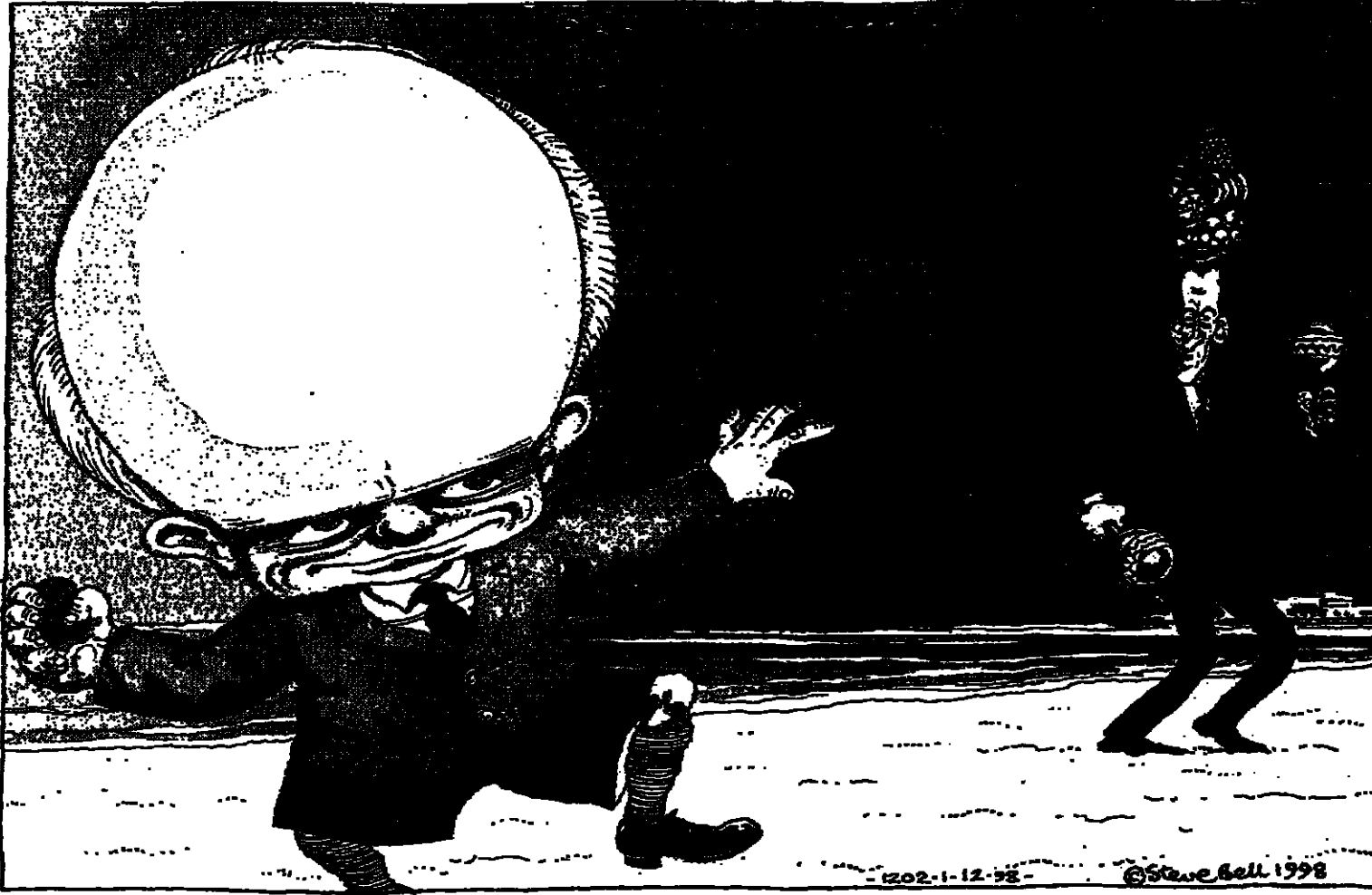
O UR humble role in the intriguing case of the Tricycle Theatre document, it seems, may be coming to an end. A document, you may recall, stamped "secret" and listing names and private numbers in the Cheesman area (home of GCHQ), was accidentally dropped in the theatre recently and we have been helping DC Matt Symonds of Special Branch retrieve it. On Friday, you may remember, we learnt that he was forced to confiscate the theatre's two eight-foot-high wheeled bins because they had thrown the document out. Yesterday I called Matt for an update. "It's probably best, Mr Bowers, if I don't speak to you over the phone," said Matt. Why ever not? "Because every time I do I seem to appear as some episode in your Diary." Before I have time to respectfully refer Matt to the Debutt's Modern Manners chapter on gratitude, he adds: "I'll phone you back, Mr Bowers, when I've taken direction on what I can say to you." And with that he is gone.

W HILE the nation's celebrations for Prince Charles' 50th birthday show no signs of abating, for Ryan Hooper, an unemployed 21-year-old from Roxburghshire, they have come to an early end. Having received an invite to the Buckingham Palace bash Ryan, in the spirit of rock 'n' roll, duly informed his local job centre that he would be away for a few days. The Daily Record, "It was the coolest thing ever," he insists, "and the most remarkable experience of my life." However, on return from the gig Ryan received a letter from his job centre. "The advertisement officer has considered the information provided," it read, "and you were not available for work." The Royalist rocker has had 500 docketed from his dole.

A FINE example of fraternal love reaches us from America. For seven hours a 16-year-old boy stood at a busy intersection junction holding a sign declaring "I am a thief". This, reports Loaded magazine, was the zero tolerance penance demanded by his older, ex-Army Ranger brother, to stamp out his younger sibling's pilfering. Indeed the draconian punishment was so moving for one motorist that he stopped and gave the young delinquent 40 bagels and a Bible.

T rue to his word DC Symonds rings back. "I've taken direction, Mr Bowers," he says, "and I can tell you that we have no comment to make but would like to thank you for your assistance so far." Stop it please, Matt. To be of service is thanks enough for us.

F OLLOWING this success, here's another public spirited appeal. A gardener at St Mary's Church in Long Ditch found 24 bags of amphetamine powder strewn across his graveyard last Friday. Do you know anything about these bags which, police say, had been dug up and dragged into the open by an animal? Revealing perhaps more than he should PC Ron Harvey said: "There must be a very unhappy local dealer out there." Call if you think you can help.



The Tory press is stoking up its EU ravings. Tell us what you think, Tony

Hugo Young



O NE month from today, on January 1, 1999, the euro will become the single currency of 11 members of the European Union. Of the myriad implications of this, not the least is that it marks the failure of a British prophecy. Until mid-1997, majority political opinion here held that this day would never dawn. Not only was the euro a crazy idea, but its craziness ensured that those temporarily beguiled by it would become aware, in the words of John Major, that it had "all the quaintness of a rain dance, and about the same potency". In the Euro-sceptic press, ridicule vied with hatred for a project that the real world would eventually refuse to accommodate.

Now that the project is happening, these critics, rather than eating their words, are changing the diet. Faced with a euro which they know will function, survive and, very probably, prosper, they focus on other issues. The last few days have seen a plethora. The Telegraph opened a new front yesterday with the promise of Brussels' imminent abolition of habeas corpus. Trial by jury is likewise doomed. Our labour laws, it barely needs to be said, face a return to unconstructed continental anti-capitalism. Worst of all, the obligatory harmonising of tax, now being plotted by numerous EU cabals, shows EMU for what it really is, the core of the centralised, undemocratic, future state of Euroland.

Most of this reporting is a travesty of fact or interpretation. There is no necessary connection between currency and a single tax system. It is true that Oskar Lafontaine, the German finance minister, speaks for harmonising tax, and some French ministers might say the same.

But there is an enormous distance between the theory and the practice of such a scheme, which has no practical necessity, nor the smallest hope of unanimous agreement in the 11, let alone the 15. The US, a federal country, does not harmonise its state taxes. Though tax havens from Luxembourg to Gibraltar and Dublin do so, VAT nor corporate tax nor income tax is set for harmonising, for the simple reason that not nearly enough people want it.

What marks the euro-11 on the brink, in fact, is not so much collaboration as uncertainty. The new German government speaks with divided voice. It is still feeling its way towards its relationship with France, though this did not prevent sections of the British press referring to yesterday's regular Franco-German summit as if it were the prelude to the take-over of Britain by a new Reich. How the European Central Bank will actually function, behind its absurd wall of non-transparency, remains uncertain: almost as uncertain as the opinions on the continent and the island, as to whether or not it should be made, by some informal method, accountable to elected politicians.

These differences, often as deep as they are subtle, and all of them constantly evolving, are the truth about the present state of the European Union. The arrival of a centre-left hegemony, far from resolving towards a simpler European future, has produced complications whose outcome is, by comparison with the heyday of Helmut Kohl, impossible to predict. The British end of this compact, however, faces special uncertainties. After talking around among senior ministers, I detect three trends.

First, even though they know tax harmonisation cannot happen, they are bothered by the continental obsession with it. At Gordon Brown's first meeting of Ecofin in May 1997, tax was top of the agenda. After the British interlude in the presidency, Austria, put tax back there. Britain is opposed to harmonisation for both tactical and economic reasons. If it did develop, they know the euro would be hard — "impossible" was a word I heard — to sell to British business, let alone the British public. Harmony, in the British view, is likely to be another word for raising and both corporate and income tax should remain key tools of economic flexibility.

Britain's counter-obsession is with economic reform. Ministers are unabashed to speak as teachers in this respect. They believe that even Lafontaine will learn that tax cuts are better job-creators than tax increases.

T HEY press forward on the competition front, and insist on the case for a true single market that covers financial services, government contracts and other zones of dastardly protectionism. In this, far from the signals of social democratic solidarity, there seems little to choose between them and Mrs Thatcher in zealous conviction on the side of openness and flexibility.

Second, their preparations to enter EMU continue. Except in public, the working assumption is "when" not "if". Below the radar screen of media frenzy, though Tony Blair has made several landmark speeches on Europe, he didn't make a single one of them in his own country. The hour, surely, has come.

deputed to the task. The banks, some of which have a hundred people engaged on 1.1.99, let alone the change-over, are scornful of such modest allocations. But ministers think they are being bold, and in January will publish a change-over plan plotting the critical path to entry. They see three or four years' preparation ahead, but have no intention of being deflected from creating the presumption of entry rather than non-entry as the routine the British should start accepting as the norm.

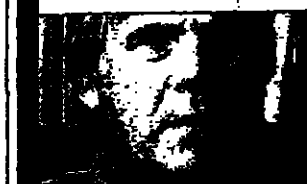
But third, they see, I think, more political pitfalls than they used to. They're worried about the Germans, and what Lafontaine may say, even if he can't do, next though they think they see a calming-down in that quarter as well. They're worried about France, the member most likely to be content to see Britain remain outside EMU. They're not bothered about the Tory Party, but they worry about the Tory press, which last week marked, it seemed to me, the end of its support for Mr Blair on several issues, and the stoking-up of the vigilance for any anti-European propaganda that lies to hand.

They're also beginning to be concerned about the people who should be their allies. On the one hand, the Clarke-Howe-Hattersley letter telling them to name the day on the other, the pseudo-friends who deride them with the German problem. They are, in short, entangled in a tremendous complexity. It may not call for a date, but it does call for a message. It is a curious but telling fact that, though Tony Blair has made several landmark speeches on Europe, he didn't make a single one of them in his own country. The hour, surely, has come.

Did the Israelis bomb their own London embassy in 1994?

Open these bomb files

Paul Foot



I WAS delighted that Robert Fisk, justly celebrated foreign correspondent of the Independent, last week took up the disturbing case of Samar Alami and Jawad Botme, who are serving 20 years for conspiring to bomb the Israeli embassy in London in 1994. But I wasn't so delighted that the headline over his article bore no relation to what he wrote or to the truth. The two young Palestinians in prison were not the bombers.

Both had cast-iron alibis. Both said at their trial that they had been contacted and encouraged to continue a ludicrous and madcap rudimentary plan to supply explosives to the Israeli-occupied territories, by a mystery man they named as Rada Moghrabi.

"THE BOMBER WHO NEVER WAS" proclaimed the Independent headline over Fisk's article about Moghrabi. A smaller heading explained: "Only Moghrabi — now suspected of being an Israeli agent — knows the truth, but apart from their (Alami's and Botme's) word there is not the slightest evidence that he ever existed."

This is nonsense. There was plenty of evidence at the long 1996 trial of Samar Alami and Jawad Botme (and two others, who were acquitted), that there was another man involved with them. All the several witnesses to the buying of the car which carried the bomb to the embassy confirmed that two men were involved. One was Jawad Botme, as he admitted at once. He said that Moghrabi had asked him to help buy a car, and he had obliged. Uncontested handwriting evidence proved that the man who signed the car purchase papers was not Botme but someone else, whom Botme identifies as Moghrabi. No one disputed that there was another man involved in the purchase — but equally no policeman or intelligence agent could identify him, let alone bring him to court.

When I first got interested in this case, I was put off by the theory, tentatively floated by Samar Alami's family and friends, that Moghrabi was an Israeli agent who had "set up" the Palestinians before arranging the bombing of his own embassy.

Though the case for the innocence of the two young people seemed powerful, I was not prepared to swallow such an apparently ludicrous story. Other suspects, perhaps from Iran, seemed more credible.

Then, last summer, in France, I met David Shayler, the former MI5 agent, who had fled the country to voice his worries about the antics of the British security services. Shayler had had no contact with the Alami family or friends of the two prisoners. In newspaper interviews he revealed that MI5 had been warned about the Israeli embassy bombing before it happened. He told me that he had also seen a written statement from a senior MI5 "line officer" expressing the view that the Israeli intelligence service had bombed its own embassy to persuade the British authorities to hand over more responsibility for security in London. The coincidence between the suspicions of the two convicted young people and this bizarre revelation from a former MI5 agent is hard to explain away.

D AVID Shayler is not a fantasist. A great deal of what he has said about other cases has been verified. If he is telling the truth about the warning and the written suspicions of his senior colleague, his testimony is vitally important. As soon as she heard about Shayler's evidence many months ago, Gareth Peirce, the London solicitor who represented Botme and Alami, wrote at once to the Director of Public Prosecutions asking to see all intelligence files relevant to Shayler's allegation. At first this request was ignored. Recently, the lawyer has been told that her application must be discussed at a "PII hearing". The letters PII, which stand for "public interest immunity", became famous after the arrest of the three directors of Matrix

There is a lot to suggest that these two Palestinians in jail are innocent

Churchill for illegally supplying military equipment to Iraq. When the defendants asked for documents to show that they were doing the government's bidding, they were told that such documents were subject to "public interest immunity" and, in the public interest, should not be disclosed. Fortunately for the defendants, a judge did not entirely agree, and enough documents were disclosed to ensure the three men's acquittal.

The case for full disclosure in the Alami/Botme case is overwhelming. There is a lot to suggest that Samar Alami and Jawad Botme had nothing whatever to do with the bombing of the Israeli embassy.

Will the intelligence files be opened? The decision is one for the new Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr. Keir Starmer. The Crown's chief prosecutor in the Israeli embassy bombing trial.

They only hit me with a gun butt. But they hammered a nail into Abdullah's head

Turkish delight

Julie Flint



and the terrible war that is no longer confined either to SE Turkey or to Turkey's Kurdish population.

I carry no brief for Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the Kurdish Workers Party, the PKK, now in Italy. But to mention the PKK's "links to gangland" without referring to the state's own, far greater links, is a grotesque distortion. Long before Mesut Yilmaz's government fell over this very issue, the Susurluk affair — a scandal that grew out of a car crash involving an MP, a senior police officer, and a convicted neo-fascist Grey Wolves party — gave conclusive proof of the state's involvement in killings, kidnappings and heroin smuggling.

And servants of the state at times went to astonishing lengths to lay the blame for their crimes at the door of the PKK. Necip Baskin, a Kurd, was kidnapped in the town of Yuksekova by masked men dressed as PKK members and bearing ransom receipts stamped with the PKK seal. The PKK men were in fact members of security forces' special teams. Baskin was one of the lucky ones. His family was influential and he was released.

Abdullah Canan was not so lucky. He was murdered. "The left side of his face was carved with the precision a professional butcher would find it hard to match," his son Vahap told me. "His throat was cut. There were electric burns on his hands and chain marks around his ankles." Vahap omitted to mention that a nail was hammered into his father's skull.

Men involved in these crimes have stood trial. Susurluk has brought a small measure of justice. But the army still refuses to co-operate with the Susurluk inquiry, and its refusal to grant journalists unimpeded access to SE Turkey ensures that many crimes — by the security forces and by the PKK — remain uninvestigated at a time when Turkey's Human Rights Association is coming under unprecedented legal attack designed to do what murder and intimidation have failed to do: put it out of business.

But individual atrocities do not give the true measure of the crimes committed by the state against its Kurdish population. As many as 2,000,000 Kurds have been forced to migrate, most of them because their villages have been burned.

They arrive in Anatolia jobless and homeless. Some may eventually prosper, but the majority live in poverty in big cities like Istanbul far from the land that

provided their livelihood before the Turkish army started its well-attested scorched-earth policy in south-eastern Turkey. The political party, HADEP and its predecessors (those most involved with the Kurdish minority) have seen more than 100 members killed — this weekend two men died during police raids.

It is a measure of the Kurds' resilience that the Kurdish language survived and is still widely-spoken despite the fact that it cannot be taught in schools and off-duty policemen have on occasion killed Kurds for the mere fact of speaking Kurdish on the streets.

Stone claims that Turkey has a "free media". Try telling that to the families of murdered journalists, to the scores of writers serving time for thought crimes, to the editors whose newspapers have been

closed and confiscated while in the pursuit of routine news. I myself have been detained twice in Turkey. On the first occasion, when I was a Guardian reporter, I was made to stand facing a wall for five hours. I was hit in the small of the back with a gun butt whenever I attempted to shift my weight. I was denied food and water for 24 hours; I was called a "prostitute" — and then released.

I repeat, I carry no brief for Ocalan. But his fate does not bear looking in a Turkish jail. Allege evidence suggests that torture in Turkey is not lagging under international pressure. They are simply getting better at hiding the signs.

Julie Flint is writing a report on the Kurdish minority in the southern Caucasus for a Kurdish human rights project



Resisting the Full Monti

Blair needs other options

THE GOVERNMENT moved swiftly yesterday to deny press reports that accepting the euro would involve swingeing increases in VAT and other taxes. But that won't make the story go away. The possibility of tax increases is one of the lethal weapons of the eurosceptics. It has been given a new lease of life by the calls for "tax harmonisation" from the high-profile finance ministers of France and Germany — Herr Lafontaine (who sounds French but is German) and M Strauss-Kahn (who sounds German but is French). All Downing Street needed to do yesterday to scotch the story was to repeat that fiscal harmonisation needed a unanimous vote in the EU and the Chancellor had already pledged not to extend VAT to food, children's clothes, newspapers or fares on public transport for the lifetime of the current parliament. Mario Monti, the European Commissioner in charge of taxation, has also spoken in favour of the need to harmonise VAT on all of these items. But, knowing it would be counterproductive to push for the Full Monti at the moment, he is instead urging Britain to head off stronger demands to harmonise tax by signing up to a Europe-wide withholding tax on savings. This is a sound proposal to prevent Euro-citizens and companies sending money to offshore tax havens thereby reducing exchequer tax revenues. The trouble is it could put a time bomb under the lucrative euro-bond market which switched to London decades ago precisely to avoid paying with-

holding taxes in the US. But there are other areas where harmonisation could be to Britain's benefit — like plugging the huge tax drain arising from the hordes of consumers who buy wines and beer in France to take advantage of much lower excise duties over the Channel.

The problem is whether Labour can do enough trade on a voluntary basis to prove it is euro-friendly and head off demands for VAT harmonisation which could prove politically suicidal for Labour. It would almost certainly increase the sensitive anti-euro vote which, according to the latest poll, is now 61 per cent having fallen from 70 per cent last year. It is theoretically possible to make a "tax-neutral" case for VAT harmonisation if the (potentially huge) revenues raised from putting VAT on food, clothes, transport and newspapers were to be used to reduce income tax and other imposts, but that's not the point. Even the Conservatives gave up trying to fund income tax reductions from higher VAT, not least because it sent the retail prices index through the roof and triggered big wage demands. In any case, few trust government to recycle enough of the increased revenues back to the people who would suffer disproportionately from taxes on food and clothes: the poor.

The Government is most vulnerable over "tax" breaks offered to particular sectors (like the budget relief for the film industry). This is good in that it boosts Britain's considerable expertise in this area but clearly unfair in terms of encouraging a level playing field in Europe. Tony Blair knows he can't keep making positive noises about Europe while refusing to budge on every proposal for reform put forward. But there are two reforms which everyone can agree on. First, the EU could raise revenues by pushing through more radical reforms to the CAP. And, second, by acting speedily on

the recommendations of the EU's Court of Auditors. The Court's recent report found \$3 billion worth of financial mismanagement and a staggering \$50 billion of VAT revenues which should have been paid but weren't. If the EU could persuade member countries to improve their housekeeping it would not only improve Europe's image in the eyes of the general public but also give the EU greater moral authority to pursue further reforms.

Taking care

A new deal for social services

BECAUSE he's a bruiser, Frank Dobson does not always manage to avoid giving the impression that he enjoys roughing up social and health professionals who have fallen down on the job. But the Health Secretary has a fine line to tread between justified criticism of error and morale-sapping broadsides at those doing difficult jobs in often trying circumstances. Yesterday's plan for separating social services inspection from the provision of care has been brewing for a long time — it's of a piece with Thatcher-era reforms implemented in the NHS, the BBC and elsewhere in local government. But it follows hard on the heels of high-profile revelations of abuse in local children's homes and nurseries and will be interpreted as condemnation.

It's not. Social care is not and never will be a soft option. The work of providing for damaged children takes huge resources, above and beyond money budgets — which Frank Dobson recognises have not kept pace with demand. But the case for reorganisation is strong. Seeborn — that's to say the comprehensive social services department — has been falling apart for years.

This Government's (welcome) emphasis on children was likely anyway to speed the demise of "generic" social work. Now provision is to be separated from regulation and quality control and substantial social services responsibilities will transfer to the centre and various appointed bodies. What's left locally is a rump and social services departments could soon go the way of local education authorities.

A danger is that provision gets fragmented along with the strong professional culture which is the public's final guarantee of quality. Social work is in dire need of "re-professionalisation" but too much emphasis on discipline and inspection may impede the renewal of self-confidence. The Office of Standards in Education has shown how centralist prescription can provoke resentment in those who actually do the job. Unlike education, social services are carried out by a large group of semi-qualified or unqualified staff, who are responsible for the bulk of face-to-face care. Their training will not come cheap. Inspection, even with the bulky apparatus Mr Dobson envisages, is not foolproof. The prevention of abuse will also require Cinderella services and hidden-away homes to become much more visible. Yet the mechanism supposed to ensure that (electing councillors locally to run services) is now to be heavily downgraded.

Private passions

Sexuality is one's own affair

FOUR days, four news items. Item One: a moving obituary in the Times of Brigadier Michael Calvert. He was, by all accounts, an extraordinarily brave soldier and inspirational leader of men. He won a DSO and Bar

for his exceptional acts of bravery as a Chindit commander against the Japanese in Burma and elsewhere. So far so good. But Calvert did not enjoy happiness in peace. The Times recorded: "from the war's end Calvert's life went steeply downhill." While serving in Germany in the early 1950s Calvert appeared before a Court Martial charged with "gross indecency" with three German youths who had called at his flat, with intent to steal. He was convicted and dismissed from the Army he had served so well. His life thereafter spiralled into a mire of alcohol. In later life he worked as a gardener.

Item two: the friend of a prominent British politician is forced to issue a rebuttal of a lurid smear story published in a weekly magazine — and hinted at in the House of Commons by the Leader of the Opposition — alleging that during a trip to Brazil the minister had savoured the nightlife of Rio and had visited a nightclub or two. The minister in question is reported to be gay. Item three: Peter Tatchell, a leading gay campaigner, is arraigned before Canterbury Magistrates Court under Section 11 of the 1860 Ecclesiastical Courts Jurisdiction Act for interrupting the Archbishop of Canterbury's Easter Sunday sermon to protest against the Church's attitudes towards homosexuality. Item four: a bronze and marble memorial to Oscar Wilde was finally unveiled yesterday in the heart of London 103 years after the trial which effectively broke him and which led to his early death 98 years ago. At the ceremony Wilde's grandson, Merlin Holland, said: "I think we're reaching a point where I hope we will be like the continent of Europe where we will regard him as a writer and his sexuality as his own affair." Too late, of course, for Wilde. Too late for Brigadier Calvert. But not too late, we hope, for others.

Letters to the Editor

Prejudice with a Punch

WE usually read the news papers with our own prejudices. This is reflected in the readers' letters. There is no debate, merely mutual indoctrination. As a reader of the Telegraph, Mail and Sun, I have decided to write this continual political diatribe to show that their goal, the United States of Europe, English politicians are recalcitrant. They know a United States of Europe is anathema to the British people. They dare not come clean. The much needed boldness is drawn attention to this and speaks for most of us. Dr Peter Monahan, Tiverton, Devon.

I AM amazed at the Guardian being brainwashed by the right-wing press to slag off Oskar Lafontaine (November 27). Herr Oskar Lafontaine is the hope and hero of the left in fighting the greed of business, closing tax havens and stopping the New Blair Third Way. Stephen Murray-Blood, Altrincham, Cheshire.

ALLAN Mackenzie's letter (November 30) proposing a 13th month in which Christmas and other festivities would be confined is truly inventive and will surely create new thinking about our hallowed Christmas. How about employing him as consultant on the Dome project? Eyke Shannon, Westleton, Suffolk.

OUR society has opposed the materialistic feeding frenzy that is Christmas for five years now, highlighting such facts as that £150 million worth of wrapping paper is the dustbin every Christmas morning. Think what that money would do for the Central American countries ruined by flood. John Richardson, Bala, Humbug! Society.

THANK you for your interview with me (A good time had by all, November 30) but I must point out that I am not the leader of the Sexual Freedom Coalition — I am simply an activist in the campaign, which is run by its members. Dr Tuppy Owens, London.

HOW refreshing to see that the Guardian still regards a claim that someone visited a gay space "smear" (Mandelstam over gay smear story, November 30). How heartening, too, that places where gay people go remain "gay bums". What a shame you forgot to use the word "notorious". Kim Rentfrew, London.

AND I thought Punch was supposed to be funny. Daphne Dorell, Cambridge.

IN response to Robert Hill's request for suitable recipes for babies (Letters, November 30), can I recommend pate of dry fish? Max Telfer, Sheffield.

In full cry for the General

SO the Guardian, very modestly, has chosen a Third Way on General Pinochet (Leader, November 30): tepid support for a precedent-setting human rights-based decision while exhorting the "blood lust" on the part of former left-wingers whose gods failed but whose appetite for Jacobin procedure is unabated.

As a member of Jack Straw's constituency Labour Party I have to confess that I too am in full cry over the possibility of bringing a murder case to the dock. Not out of blood lust, but because my gods, if they ever failed, are at least showing some kind of resurrection at the moment: the preference for democracy over capitalism, due process over terror, human beings over markets, elected socialists over tin pot lackeys of the West.

It is a pity, at a time when the Americans are applying pressure on Pinochet's behalf, and Margaret Thatcher is plumping for her cronies in the international arms trade, that the position of one of our few liberal newspapers should be so mealy-mouthed. You correctly state that the Pinochet issue separates the sheep from the goats; your editorial proves that when the opposing forces step to either side, there are still plenty of weasels left in between. Joe Gutman, Blackburn, Lancs.

THE blueprint for the institutional violence practised in South and Central America was drawn up by the CIA under the auspices of the US government. To read (US urges Pinochet return, November 30) that the current US government has expressed concern that the Pinochet affair is "destabilising democracy in Chile" smacks not just of hypocrisy. It reeks of fear that world public opinion will demand that the US be held accountable for the part it played in the original coup to topple Allende and destroy democracy, with all the horrific tortures this involved. Rev Peter Morgan, Liverpool.

I AM entirely in agreement with your leader that the Chilean government feels that Pinochet is fit and well enough to stand trial in Chile, he is fit and well enough to stand trial anywhere else.

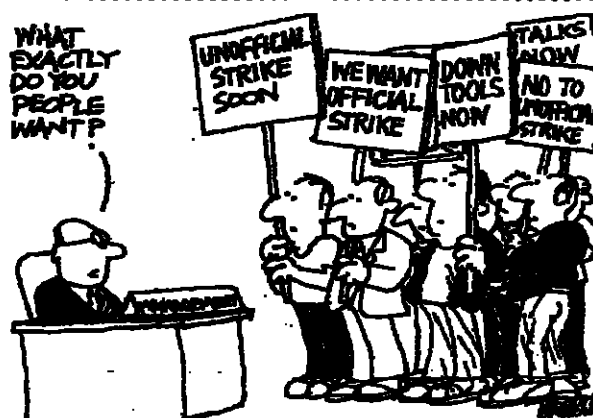
Chile was "democratised" on terms dictated by the military, a so-called "protected democracy". The balance of forces in Chile between the military and the civilian government has been, and still is, tilted towards the military, unlike in Argentina, where defeat in the Malvinas war left the military humiliated and weak. Allonson was able to prosecute the former dictators in civil courts, breaking a centuries-old tradition of the military only being tried in

military courts. In Chile, the military is in a much more powerful position and it will doubtless insist on its historic prerogative to try Pinochet in its own military courts. We can safely assume that if this were to happen the military would close ranks, whitewash its bloody record, and thwart any possibility of justice, being done. Dr Christopher Krawell, Sale, Cheshire.

HOW glad I am that I attempt the cryptic crossword each day. I might otherwise have missed the excellent article by Andy Robinson which was placed right next to the puzzle (Thank the General for Thatcher, November 30). It provided a fine overview of the economic experiments carried out by the Thatcher and Reagan. Most enlightening! Peter Cleall, Brighton.

YOU say that the US is worried that the Pinochet affair is "destabilising democracy in Chile". They should know — they have unparalleled expertise in the subject. Terry Marshall, London.

WILL the new Asylum Bill include fast track extradition for tyrants? John Holt, Leeds.



Low strike rate for industrial action

I AM sympathetic to Seumas Milne's argument (Jubilee Line climbdown on safety strike, November 26) that the "outcome of the electricians' unofficial stoppage appears to be part of a trend towards more successful strikes in the last couple of years".

But strikes in the last couple of years are in fact no more or less successful than they have been for the rest of the 1990s. This means they are relatively more successful than those of the 1980s, but the level of strikes is at its lowest level (216 last year) since 1981, as are workers involved and days "lost". However this is not the full picture. Unofficial strikes appear to be more effective than official ones as a result of the element of surprise. The number of ballots for industrial action exceeds those cases of industrial

action by around 4:1, with evidence suggesting most are successful in being used as bargaining chips. Non-strike industrial action is more common and relatively successful but goes unrecorded in our strike statistics. Although some workers in the south-east of England and in construction and electrical trades are in a better position to exact concessions as a result of their labour markets, this cannot be said for many other workers.

Nonetheless, the results of the actions that are taken are invariably compromises, not outright victories; management's unilateral actions have been held in check without being reversed. Dr Gregor Gall, Senior lecturer in industrial relations, University of Stirling.

Teachers on a fast track to trouble in the staff room

A chairman of two governing bodies, I anticipate David Blunkett's new measures (Fast track to top pay for elite among trainee teachers, November 30) will lead to acrid divisions — between staff and governors and within staff rooms. How can people be "guaranteed" accelerated promotion? Surely it's easier to assess whether someone's been on a fast track to top posts when a career is well under way, not at the launch? Canon Roger Hill, Newark, Notts.

THIS year the staff, senior management and governors of my school sought industry help in redesigning our appraisal system. Two specialist companies stated that successful appraisal systems are not linked to pay in a pay-related system everyone perverts the system to maximise pay, if pay is taken out of the equation employees are free to focus on the objectives of the business. The whole system seems to

ignore very basic motivation theory: money is not a motivator, but it becomes a demotivator when it is inadequate or unfair. There are many other very important motivators that seem to have been completely ignored by the Government and the unions, the most important of these being well-structured and well-funded continuous professional development for all teachers. The current proposals seem to suggest that there will be a well trained elite ("a fast track promotion scheme for 1,000 teachers a year"). Teachers fairly obviously, requires every teacher to be well trained; who wants their child to be taught by someone who is not continuously updating their skills? Teachers are motivated by team successes, because so much of what they do is in teams and no one individual is responsible. Charlotte Davies, Deputy head, Wallington High School for Girls, Surrey.

Oxfam Hurricane Appeal

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Mr. Mrs. Miss. Ms

Address

Postcode

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OXFAM

Louis Blom-Cooper lays down the law

IT is incumbent upon responsible journalists in writing and commenting on cases in the courts to make sure that they get their law right. Jeremy Hardy complains (The trials of Winston Silcott, November 26) that, in rejecting Mr Silcott's application to refer his conviction for the murder in 1984 of Anthony Smith, the Criminal Cases Review Commission has wrongly concluded that the Court of Appeal would refuse to consider fresh evidence that tends to support Mr Silcott's version of the events which are different from those put forward at his trial. Mr Hardy, in short, com-

plains that the commission is impermissibly second-guessing the judiciary. But that is precisely what the commission is directed by Parliament to do. The Criminal Appeal Act 1995 provides that a reference to the Court of Appeal shall not be made unless the commission considers that there is a real possibility that the conviction would not be upheld on reference. It may be difficult for the commission members to "re-assess what goes on in the minds of the judiciary", but they have to do their best to anticipate what the Court of Appeal would do in the light of evidence not previously heard by the courts.

Mr Hardy is also wrong to say that the commission "is answerable to no one". If those advising Mr Silcott can discern some defect in the reasoning of the commission's decision, an application to the High Court for judicial review is available. It is fair to say that there is some genuine puzzlement about what constitutes "a real possibility" that the conviction would not be upheld on reference. I am sure that the commission would welcome judicial elucidation of this opaque language, the sooner the better. Sir Louis Blom-Cooper QC, London.

Doctor's prison dilemma

JONATHAN Steele's eloquent appeal for the freeing of Dr Asrat Woldeyes, one of Ethiopia's most distinguished sons (Doctor defiant, November 28) deserves the support of all who care about human rights. I was the British Ambassador to Ethiopia at the time of Jonathan Steele's visit in 1985 when he fell desperately ill and Dr Asrat, responding to our urgent appeal, saved his life, so I too feel very much in his debt.

It is good that British and American embassy officials have periodically visited Dr Asrat in a demonstration of concern about the conditions in which he is serving his successive prison sentences. But the even more important issue, as Jonathan Steele's article makes clear, is that Dr Asrat ought not to be a prisoner at all.

It would show that there is substance in Robin Cook's admirable call for a new ethical dimension in Britain's foreign policy if our government were to use its undoubted influence as a major aid donor and political friend of Ethiopia to press the Ethiopian prime minister for Dr Asrat's release. Sir Brian Barber, London.

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How toying with Barbie could lead to a Blair babe with feminist balls

MELISSA Benn muses: "Something has happened to public women: it's as if they have all developed the same manner and the same look" (Wanted: Blair's babe with feminist balls, November 26) and the answer was provided by Dea Birkett in the Weekend section (The Barbie, buy me, November 28). The phenomenon of Barbie and public women in the 1990s is synonymous.

Public women in the 1990s are like Barbie. They are clean, clinical and asexual. Like Barbie, they do not have their sex in a vagina. A woman with a vagina symbolises sexuality, which equates with sexual energy. Moreover, like Barbie, they smile back at you — they don't

react when you attack them and they all look the same. I assume it's because public women without sexuality are popular just like Barbie. And like Barbie, they belong to that somebody who bought them: ie corporate culture. Give Barbie a vagina for the millennium! And, give Ken back his balls! Only then may Tony find his babe with feminist balls. Yolande Watson, Leeds.

BARBIE is a toy — she is made to be played with and children tend to like attractive toys. A fashion doll made to look more realistic flopped miserably — Barbie has lasted because she appeals to little girls. Do give children some

credit — they know she is a toy and they don't even consider looking like her. As for her being unrealistic, well, I haven't seen too many children who look like Cabbage Patch Kids around, but people do not seem to have a problem with them. As a feminist, I consider Barbie an excellent role model — she can be anything and she is independent (the car is always Barbie's — as is the house, the stables, the swimming pool and so on — Ken is permitted to use them, but they belong to Barbie). Oh — one point I really must make! Dea Birkett writes: "It's true to say that the only thing rigid Barbie can do with her legs is open them." As any little girl who

has tried to sit a straight-leg Barbie on a horse knows, this is just not true. Barbie, like the lady she is, keeps her legs firmly together. Elizabeth Lee, President, Barbie Collectors' Club of Great Britain.

OUR membership is made up of people from all walks of life, many with degrees and good jobs. With over 250 members, you may rest assured that not everyone is "camp" or even gay for that matter. We work very hard to produce our newsletter, which Ms Birkett dismissed as a "straw-together affair of stapled A8 sheets". Being a non-profit making club, we do the best we can to unite our members in some way.

Ms Birkett is attempting to portray Barbie collectors as somewhat peculiar, perhaps she should look a little closer to home, as her tale of early Barbie torture certainly creates cause for concern in my opinion. James Paddick, Barbie Collectors' Club of Great Britain.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used. Please provide a reference to the relevant article. It is helpful to us if typewritten letters are double-spaced and printed in large type.

Paul McKee

Figuring out the news

PAUL MCKEE, who has died aged 59, was one of the great innovators of television news in the 1970s and 1980s. The pioneer of computer graphics on general election nights, he also organised the first proper exit polls in British elections, introduced the first computerised TV newsroom, and was a founding father of Channel 4 News.

One of seven children from a working-class Catholic family, he was brought up in Bradford before studying mathematics at Imperial College, London. He acquired his first feel for the nuts and bolts of elections while helping with the campaigns of his father, who spent three decades as a Labour member and alderman on Bradford City Council.

Recruited from English Electric in the 1960s, McKee's first triumph was when ITN launched its revolutionary VT30 computer graphics system in the October 1974 election, thus allowing Peter Snow to analyse results on screen. Legend has it that VT30 was based on a knitting programme, though McKee also adapted systems from the chemical industry. The BBC was shocked at being outflanked by ITN, and spent huge sums over the next few years catching up. By then McKee had developed a successor, VT80, which effectively ended the era of letters in TV graphics.

Recognising his vision and wider managerial talents, the ITN editor David Nicholas assigned McKee to develop new programme outlets. Defeated for the ITV breakfast franchise, he successfully concluded a deal for ITN to make a daily, hour-long news programme when Channel 4 started in 1982. It was a fraught relationship, and Channel 4 bosses felt he was the only ITN person who understood what the new channel was all about; among other things that meant no sport or royals.

He even spent a few months as acting editor of Channel 4 News, when the first editor of the programme was forced out in 1983. Colleagues were highly sceptical about whether a computer programme could do the job, but he took to it with gusto, running editorial meetings as if he were a permanent appointment.

McKee's great strength was detail. Journalists preparing ITN's Budget coverage would

find him, late at night, cigarette in hand, jabbing away at a calculator re-checking their sums. Professional pollsters working on exit polls were obliged to discuss every question and assess every result with him, which is why ITN rarely got its predictions wrong. He thrived on election data, exporting to Ireland and India his expertise in TV interpretation and presentation. When a sudden Irish general election clashed with a long-planned break in the Gambia, his staff had to telecast the constituency results to his holiday hotel.

The small world of ITN, with around 1,000 staff, was perhaps his ideal milieu. As deputy chief executive, his door was literally always open and even the most junior member of staff was welcome to come and air his or her views. McKee was always encouraged to pursue his own interests in computers and elections, but he found himself in a minority when opposing ITN's plans to



McKee... television pioneer

build grandiose new offices in Gray's Inn Road. He was eventually proved right when the project almost crippled the company financially.

In 1986 McKee was enticed to become Paul Fox's deputy at Yorkshire Television, with the task of mapping out the future. TV unions rejected his analysis, although most of his measures were gradually implemented. But when Fox suddenly left in 1988 to become managing director of BBC Television, McKee lost out in the struggle for succession. Uncomfortable with the new regime, he resigned.

Perhaps his gentlemanly style, his old-fashioned values of decency, cheerfulness, compassion and conciliation, were out of place in an industry now run by money men. He started a small computer magazine, and kept up work

on foreign election programmes, but though still only in his fifties, most of his last 10 years were spent in semi-retirement.

Leukaemia was first diagnosed six years ago, but he told very few friends. Covering last winter's elections in India, colleagues thought he merely had a bad back as he wandered round bent double. Despite the pain, he showed the same enthusiasm for the obscure minutiae of results from some distant province. After 36 hours without sleep, someone suggested it was surely time to rest. "I can't," McKee insisted. "It's such fun."

Paul McKee never married, though for the last decade he lived with his partner, Liz Lorrimer, a colleague from Yorkshire TV. They shared a passion for horses.

Michael Crick

Peter Sissons writes: Paul McKee was unique among the television executives of his generation. He was a mathematician, with a shrewd business brain. He had journalistic flair that was often brilliant and always ethical. And he was a respected and gifted manager of people, who knew how to lead a team and encourage the talent within it. But his place in the history of television news broadcasting lies in the vision with which he saw the possibilities of linking a computer that could do calculations, with a computer that could show pictures.

I was fortunate, when Peter Snow left for *Newsnight*, to work with Paul on general election coverage. His passion was to explain, not in academic terms, but in ways the ordinary viewer would find enjoyable and stimulating, and television journalists, as at heart, a moral problem — these were people who were being managed and, as such, enjoyed the moral protection enjoyed by everyone.

"Mainstream" approaches had turned towards the neutrality of the conditions understood by the catch-all "dementia". But the reality and concreteness of the person, so Kitwood thought, was lost; there was a tendency to treat the disease not the person. He called it "malignant psychology".

As a schoolmaster, a contributor to third world emancipation, and a psychologist, Kitwood's work was marked by the centrality of a moral issue. Born in Lincolnshire, educated at Rugby, he graduated in natural sciences from Cambridge. He was ordained into the priesthood, taught at Sherborne, then went to teach in Uganda. Even Tom was at a loss in the times of Idi Amin and, although he married there, he finally brought his family back to England.

It was then that I met him, when he had begun a new career as a psychology student at Bradford University. He was forthcoming about his work, and, though reticent about himself, it became clear that he had moved away from Christianity, while retaining an intense moral commitment to the sustenance of people in dignity and purpose. He had considerable personal charm, but was capable of single-minded de-



Kitwood... abandoning standard practice he asked young people about the moral problems they had faced and how they had dealt with them

Professor Tom Kitwood

Morality and memories

IT WAS almost by chance that the psychologist Tom Kitwood, who has died aged 61, was led into the work by which he is best known, his comprehensive studies of "dementia in life". He had been consulted by the Bradford Health Authority on the work being done for it on the management of dementia.

Kitwood had been struck by the way that the moral dimension of human life, perhaps its defining characteristic, had been eliminated from a great deal of academic psychology. Bradford, he saw, was dementia management, as at heart, a moral problem — these were people who were being managed and, as such, enjoyed the moral protection enjoyed by everyone. "Mainstream" approaches had turned towards the neutrality of the conditions understood by the catch-all "dementia". But the reality and concreteness of the person, so Kitwood thought, was lost; there was a tendency to treat the disease not the person.

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tion to a project, a characteristic that produced a certain hardness of character.

Kitwood's first psychological research was an attempt to chart the ways that competence in moral reasoning and sophistication of moral considerations changed as children grew into adulthood. His entry into this area coincided in British social psychology with serious doubts — which he shared — about laboratory research.

So he abandoned the method of the moral development guru, Larry Kohlberg, which had been to present children with a story involving a moral dilemma and ask them what they would advise the hero to do. Instead, Kitwood sat down and asked children and adolescents to tell him, a stranger — about the moral problems they had personally faced and how they had dealt with them.

The results were quite at odds with Kohlberg's Piaget-

than "ladder" of developmental stages. In his wonderful book, *Conversations with a Stranger*, Kitwood showed how among the middle-class members of his sample the same children drew on different Kohlbergian levels of moral reasoning strategically, choosing that which would be of most use for the occasion.

Working-class and upper-class children tended to settle on a single style and stick with it. This work had fascinating social and psychological resonances.

Then came the Bradford Health Authority consultation, and over at Georgetown University, in the United States, a group led by Steven Sabat had come to similar conclusions. Initially, neither group knew of the other's existence. Sabat had discovered that, in many cases, the diagnostic procedures used for people apparently suffering from Alzheimer's disease created a false impression of cognitive confusion, leading to depersonalisation for the patient.

In ways parallel to Kitwood, he began to develop regimes of management in which the person's surviving cognitive competences were identified and enhanced. This, of course, was just what Kitwood was doing in Bradford, which had led to the founding of the Dementia Group.

Many of us are struck, from time to time, with intuitions that all is not well morally in some domain of human life; that attention to persons is giving way to technological considerations. Few of us have the toughness of character that Tom Kitwood possessed. With a sound scientific background well able to comprehend the neurology of dementia, he set about doing something practical in response to his deeply held moral intuitions.

Norm Harris

Tom Kitwood, dementia expert, born February 16, 1937; died November 1, 1998

Susan Bellman

Sound work for children

SUSAN Bellman, who has died of leukaemia aged 51, established one of the world's best known cochlear implant programmes for children.

As consultant audiological physician at London's Great Ormond Street Hospital, for the past 16 years she made its audiological medicine department world renowned, increased its complement from one part-time consultant to three full-time consultants and established the cochlear implant programme, the first in Britain to implant congenitally deaf children and, in particular, children with multiple handicaps. Recently, the service celebrated the 100th child to be implanted.

Born Susan Evans, she grew up in Blenheim, Oxfordshire, and studied at St Mary's Hospital Medical School, London. Following an elective visit to Iceland as a student, she produced an important work on leprosy in the island. After qualifying she moved into otolaryngology. She came to feel that the surgical speciality was ultimately not for her, but still achieved her fellowship in the Royal College of Surgeons and, during her training, attended a clinical audiology course in Southampton. This was organised by Ross Coles and myself, and convinced Susan of her future direction. She became one of



Bellman... cochlear pioneer

the first group of senior registrars to be trained in the new speciality of audiological medicine, and in 1983 was appointed as consultant audiological physician to Great Ormond Street, to build on the hospital's forward looking tradition of audiology.

Susan played important roles in both the British Association of Audiological Physicians and the International Association of Physicians, whose newsletter she edited. She provided thoughtful views on the development of our speciality and participated enthusiastically in the association.

She did much to develop a paediatric audiological medicine in Britain in which the child's needs were paramount. She wrote extensively on this and was responsible, with Susan Snashall, for the

definitive document *Paediatric Audiological Medicine Into The 1990s*, which has had a major impact on its development in the last decade.

Susan was a real enthusiast for her family, her work, and her pleasures. She was a fine companion at international conferences, always having tidbits of information about the cities we were visiting. She even committed herself to milking our goats while staying in our house in Wales. She adopted the Jewish faith with her first marriage to Martin Bellman, and became well accepted in the north London Jewish community. Indeed, she received great support from them during her illness, and it was at this time that she met her second husband, Gerald Levin, who provided her with wonderful support during her last years. She is survived by Gerald and her three sons from her first marriage, Joel, Samuel and David.

Dorothy Stephens

Susan Caroline Bellmann, audiological physician, born April 27, 1947; died November 9, 1998

Death Notices

SMITH, Patricia Mary, died on 23rd November 1998, after a short illness, caused by her son Richard, by Jeffrey and by her many friends and admirers. An inspiring and creative social worker, mother of 3rd generation. Enquiries to John Nokes & Sons, 121 Ladbroke Grove, W11, tel 011 660 1161.

SPANGLER, Marjorie Teresa, early passed away on 25th November 1998 after a short illness. Beloved mother of Stephen, Teresa, Fiona, Catherine, Louise, Victoria, Frances, Margaret and Nicola; grandmother of thirteen and great-grandmother of the late Harry Spangler.

WATKINS, John R., died suddenly in Spain, 30th November 1998. Will be sadly missed by daughter Chris and Paul and grandchildren Lulu, Emma-Jane and Elliot. Funeral to be arranged, contact Ali Smith, 01753 82222.

WHITE, Dorothy Marian CBE, dearly loved wife of John and mother of Jonathan, Kevin and Richard, died on November 29th at the Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead, London. Funeral Service for family and immediate friends. Donations to the Falls Prevention Association at 5 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SL. A Memorial Service will be held early in the new year - to be announced.

In Memoriam

COOPER, Marjorie Goring CBE FRSL, a peace-loving and dedicated life, will be held at St Paul's, Covent Garden, at noon on Thursday 14th January 1999.

Birthdays

HACKETT, On 1st December, 1927, to Miss and Mrs. Hackett (Mrs. Hackett), daughter born day, Grandchildren: Michael and Catherine, Great Grandchildren: Lorraine.

BYE notice: Mrs. Hackett, telephone 0171 733 4267 or 0171 733 4102 between 10am and 3pm Mon-Fri.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

THE first casualty in the first phase of the transfer to our new editorial computer system was yesterday's crossword (number 21445, on page 19): one clue was missing and one line of another disappeared. The lost clues are: 26 across: La Costa resort by the sea (7); and 18 down: She's a real swinger in Paris life (7). The solution (fingers crossed) appears today on page 30. We hope readers will bear with us as we master our new computers.

HOMOPHONE. A column in the comment section (page 16 yesterday) contained the sentence: "Marianne herself, bearing one breast as she strode across the barricades, had been kept from me."

AN e-mail transmission error garbled two sets of figures in Peter Preston's column (page 16, yesterday). The cost of the broken leg was \$65. The cost of the Singapore stitches was \$265.

THERE were several errors in our Good Messiah Guide (page 19, Friday Review, November 27). The Northern Sinfonia is not performing the work at Westminster Central Hall, London, on December 17. It will be presenting it on Thursday, December 10 at St Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. We listed the wrong venue for the Goldsmith's Choral Union/LPO Messiah in London on Wednesday, December 23: it will be given in the Royal Albert Hall.

ENGLAND lost the 1958-9 Ashes series 4-0, not 4-1 as stated in the Way Back When feature on pages 6 and 7 of our sports section yesterday.

THE trainer of John David, which won the 3.55 at Cheltenham last Wednesday, was Mark Pitman, not Jenny Pitman (his mother) as we said in a racing round-up article (page 28, November 26).

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 5229, or by e-mail: readers@guardian.co.uk

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Birthdays

Woody Allen, actor, writer and director, 63; Prof Sir Norman Browne, chairman, Joint Consultants Committee, 67; Mike Denness, former cricketer, 58; Dame Alicia Markova, prima ballerina,

88; Keith Michell, actor and director, 70; Bette Midler, singer and comedienne, 53; Gilbert O'Sullivan, singer, 52; Bruce Page, journalist and publisher, 62; Stephen Pollakoff, playwright, 46; Richard Pryor, actor, 58; Dame Mildred Riddlehall, former senior civil servant,

85; Andy Ripley, financier and former rugby international, 51; David Roddan, general secretary, Prison Governors Association, 40; Lord Roll of Ipsden, economist, 91; Lee Trevino, golfer, 59; Stephanie West, classical, 61; Prof Michael Williams, nuclear engineer, 62.

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A Country Diary

SOMERSET: Two walks, one around Painswick in Gloucestershire and the other across fields on Horwington Marsh, a few miles from home, made an intriguing contrast. In Painswick, the grand merchants' houses, beautifully fashioned with architraves, pediments, and even ionic columns, and the fine Cotswold finish of even the humble dwellings, all speak of settled rural prosperity in times when wool could make towns rich.

The younger of two sheepdogs, when we came upon a peaceful company of sheep, scattered across a spacious field, unobtrusively rounding them up into a compact circle in one corner. His instinct did not tell him that these were ewes running with the ram and should have been left in peace.

needed animals that function well as economic units, even if you have to go as far as Builth Wells to get them. "Welsh mules", a cross between Welsh Hill sheep and Border Leicester, are a relatively new breed, noted as good breeders and mothers and adaptable to climates and conditions throughout Britain. They look at home on our marsh, far removed from hard Welsh hills.

The farm in Blackmore Vale, 90 acres of low-lying pasture, supports a flock of 320 sheep. Their fleeces will not create enough wealth to cover the cost of shearing. They are "Welsh mules", bred for meat, not wool. A lamb that fetched £50 three years ago fetches £25 today. So you

JOHN VALLINS

Post Office returns to gender, page 12

Tomorrow: Dire prospects for poorest

Executive Financial Editor: Paul Murphy
Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239 9610
Fax: 0171-833 4456

FinanceGuardian

Takeover plans



Even after paying \$10 billion for the US Bankers Trust which has a solid presence in London, above, Deutsche Bank is set on a major European acquisition. PICTURE: GRAHAM TURNER

Deutsche builds empire

Jill Treanor and Lisa Buckingham

DEUTSCHE Bank of Germany still intends to blaze an acquisition trail in Europe despite its record-breaking \$10.1 billion acquisition of the US investment bank Bankers Trust, announced yesterday. Even after the \$93-a-share acquisition of Bankers Trust, Deutsche's chief executive, Rolf Breuer, said the bank still had the funds to pull off a major deal in Europe.

Banking analysts believe the German bank will now set its sights on a target in France or Italy. The combined Deutsche/Bankers Trust will already be the world's biggest financial services company and its plans to expand in Europe will add to the bubble of merger speculation dominating financial services companies around the world.

Merger speculation has escalated in London since the sudden departure of Martin

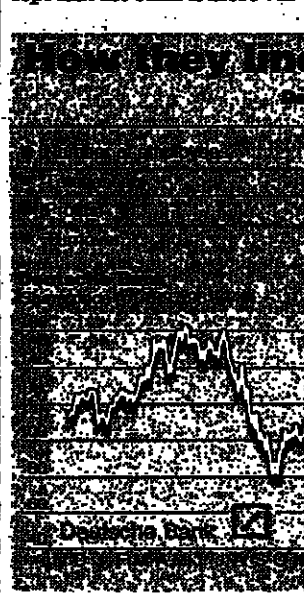
Taylor from Barclays where he was chief executive. The insurance company Prudential was last night tipped as front-runner to merge with the troubled bank.

Senior fund managers said that Sir Peter Davis, chief executive of the Prudential, had ambitions to merge with a banking organisation even though the company recently said it would not be interested in buying a branch network. The insurer and the bank already share a boardroom connection in Sir Martin Jacobson, Prudential's chairman, who is a former chairman of Barclays' investment banking business, BZW, as well as being a main board member.

Prudential declined to comment on the speculation but the company has given clear signs of its planned strategy by holding merger talks with NatWest and is thought to have the Halifax in its sights. Halifax is itself regarded as a potential partner for Barclays, as is NatWest.

However, at the first in a series of meetings with share-

holders yesterday, Barclays' two leading executives, chairman Andrew Buxton and the acting chief executive, Sir Peter Middleton, refused to accept that the bank is more vul-



nerable to a takeover. The two men had offered to meet all investors to try to calm fears that one of Britain's biggest banks has been permanently damaged by recent events.

In Frankfurt, Deutsche said it would fund the acquisition of Bankers Trust, the largest-ever takeover of a US financial house by a foreign company — by selling new shares worth 4 billion marks (about £1.5 billion) as well as bonds and its spare cash.

In the process of forming Deutsche Bankers Trust, scheduled to be completed by next May, provided it gets the necessary approval from regulators and shareholders, Deutsche will spend \$1 billion in restructuring charges and \$400 million in "golden hand-cuffs" to retain the Bankers Trust staff it wants to keep.

It will shed 5.5 per cent of its workforce, most of the cuts in London and New York. London is expected to lose at least 3,000 jobs. The cuts will be spread equally among fixed-income equities, investment technology and the bank's central functions.

The group will cherry-pick the "best of breed" from each organisation in a move which is expected to lead to inflating. An integration committee

has already begun to sort through the possibilities. "Cost synergies is one reason for this merger, but not the most important one," Mr Breuer said. "Bankers Trust is a platform on which we shall build an opening into the US."

The combined group will still fail to match the prowess of firms such as Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs and the Swiss bank UBS. Bankers warn that Deutsche and Bankers Trust will have to work hard to avoid culture clashes as they combine their operations.

Matthew Czepliewski, banking analyst at Salomon Smith Barney, the US investment bank, congratulated Deutsche for admitting the scale of the job cuts.

"Having said that, job cuts on paper are one thing. In practice they are another," he said. Frank Newman, chairman and chief executive of Bankers Trust, will become the first American to join Deutsche Bank's management board.

Notebook

A Transatlantic bridge too far



Alex Brummer

Maybe Deutsche Bank has found the magic pill with its \$10.1 billion purchase of Bankers Trust. But somehow one doubts it. The best reason for Deutsche's opportunistic deal is that it bridges the Atlantic in a way no European institution has so far managed. This gives Deutsche and its ambitious chief executive, Rolf Breuer, access to the US clients, distribution and fund management that has eluded overseas institutions in the US.

One has to question whether Deutsche Bank has the culture or the skill to carry this off. Its stewardship of Morgan Grenfell has generally been seen as disappointing, with a frustrated management in Frankfurt eventually becoming tired of the UK investment bank's entrepreneurial ways and moving control back to Germany.

In the case of Bankers Trust the difference in culture is even more pronounced. One only has to look at the third-quarter results from Bankers Trust, when profits were all but wiped out by trading activities, to recognise the difference in culture between a German institution — protected by its industrial shareholders — in companies such as DaimlerChrysler. Aside from the mammoth task of overhauling the Bankers Trust management, Deutsche Bank

will also have to integrate the European investment banking activities of Bankers Trust with those of Deutsche, a task which eliminates 5,000 jobs in Britain and the US.

No one should underestimate the sheer management effort required to put in place the control and risk systems for a transatlantic investment bank. In the market turmoil of this autumn it was the best-integrated houses, like Morgan Stanley Dean Witter and Goldman Sachs, which held up best, while newly merged groups like UBS came apart at the seams.

One might have thought that integrating Bankers Trust was enough for anyone to attempt. But not a bit of it. Mr Breuer still believes there are acquisitions to be made in Europe too. The prices may be right at present, but it would be sheer arrogance to imagine that Germany's flagship bank — with its legion of mistakes from the Far East to Russia — has the necessary skills to make a decent list of it.

Barclays brawl

NOT that the UK can boast the most brilliant management skills. The more one learns of the trans-

ition at the top of Barclays, the more questions arise about its corporate governance.

The approved set-up at the top of any company is a non-executive chairman and chief executive. Understandably by dint of complication and experience some companies choose to have an executive chairman: it would be hard for Sir Brian Pittman at Lloyds TSB to be anything else.

Barclays went one better. In addition to an executive chairman, Andrew Buxton, and the now departed chief executive Martin Taylor, it appointed an executive vice-chairman, Sir Andrew Large. That would have been fine if Sir Andrew, one of the City's most experienced regulators, had been given a proper role such as supervising and fine tuning the risk management systems. He wasn't. This was a structure which must have been stifling for an ambitious chief executive like Martin Taylor, although the speed at which his mind worked was almost certainly too fast for a carrier fleet of the Barclays size.

Having made a fundamental structural error, the non-executives might at least have felt it was incumbent upon them to offer investors a full explanation of where the process went wrong. But transparency, it would seem, is a quality the UK preaches at global international meetings but cannot apply to its own financial institutions.

The handling of this affair has been a travesty. The senior non-executive, Sir Nigel Mobbs and the now all-powerful chairman-designate and acting chief executive Sir Peter Middleton, should have known better.

Fall fools

By tradition, financial markets finish the year on a high note. But in the last trading day of November — after a strong autumn performance in London and New York — there were the first signs that the "fool's rally" of this Fall may be coming to an end. This despite the interest-rate cuts on both sides of the Atlantic and the return of mega-mergers.

This should not be that surprising. Earnings reports on both sides of the Atlantic, reflecting the fundamentals in the economies, continue to be disappointing. Moreover, the push towards lower interest rates appears to be coming to a shuddering halt at the doors of the European Central Bank, with Wim Duisenberg, its president, continuing to renege on the necessity of the idea. Here in the UK the stronger than expected net consumer credit lending figures of £1.2 billion for October appear to conflict with evidence of gloom on the high street and may also militate against a December interest rate cut.

All of this has reinjected uncertainty into the markets. Given continued global uncertainty, this may well be a year in which equities finish with a whimper rather than a bang.

Sterling takes tumble on rates bet

FTSE and Dow fall as consumers borrow more than expected.

Mark Atkinson reports

FADING hopes of an early cut in the core European interest rates sent sterling tumbling against the German mark on the foreign exchanges yesterday.

In its biggest one-day fall for a month, sterling shed four pence to DM2.79 as dealers concluded that the Bank of England's monetary policy committee would be much quicker off the mark in lowering the cost of borrowing.

Despite official figures that show healthy consumer demand for credit, the odds in the markets were still on any other quarter point cut to 6.5 per cent at next week's meeting of the MPC.

UK interest rates have already been cut twice since October, initially by a quarter point but later by a half point to ward off the threat of a faster than expected slowdown in economic growth.

Even given the prospect of

lower UK rates, the stock market fell by 100 points to close at 5743.9. Analysts blamed profit-taking for the slide.

At the end of last week, in a speech in London, Wim Duisenberg, president of the European Central Bank, damped down growing expectations of a quick cut in rates in the euro-zone when it becomes operational next month.

His comments, repeated in a newspaper interview over the weekend, boosted the strength of the mark against the dollar and the pound.

The pound was also driven lower by talk of the Bundesbank selling sterling "as an administrative transaction," according to Standard &

Poor's market analysis service, MMS International. Figures showing UK consumers borrowed more than expected in October failed to dispel expectations for lower borrowing costs. UK net consumer lending — or gross lending less debt repayments — fell to £1.183 billion from a revised £1.251 billion in September. City economists had expected consumers to borrow around £1 billion.

Kevin Darlington, economist with the Dutch bank ABN-Amro, said the consumer credit data flew in the face of other indicators pointing to tough trading conditions on the high street.

"Consistent with our view of a soft landing for the economy next year, these data help confirm our suspicion that there is more steam in the consumer than generally acknowledged," he said.

But other analysts said the figures would not deter the MPC from cutting interest rates next week to stem declining business confidence.

Separate Bank of England data showed cash in circulation rose 0.4 per cent in November from October and 4.8 per cent from a year ago, in line with expectations.

US stocks fell from records, led by computer makers and banks, as investors scaled back their expectations for fourth-quarter profits. The Dow Jones index suffered its worst decline since Oct. 1.

Power group looks to regions

David Gow Industrial Editor

BRITISH Energy, Britain's biggest power generator, is stepping up its efforts to acquire a regional electricity company after losing out yesterday in the battle to take over London Electricity.

The nuclear generator saw its £1.8 billion bid to acquire the capital's two million electricity consumers fall some £100 million short of a knock-out offer from the French state-owned company, Electricite de France, to London's American owners, Entergy. It paid £1.3 billion in February 1997 and, with tax credits, will get £2 billion for London.

BE, seen within the City as losing out too often in high-profile bids, is understood to be eyeing other US-owned distributors and suppliers.

It is also keen to buy one of the two coal-fired power plants put up for sale by rival generator PowerGen as the price for gaining Government approval of its £1.9 billion purchase of East Midlands electricity company.

Both BE and the City insisted last night that BE had paid over the odds for London, with analysts arguing that the state-owned corporation could fall foul of a regulatory turf war between London and Brussels which could block its unconditional offer.

BE could then be forced to resell London at a loss of up to £400 million, perhaps even to EE, but both it and its advisers, Lehman Brothers, hinted that the European Commission was the sole competition authority to decide on the deal.

Allders keeps its lead in the march toward recession

Roger Cowe

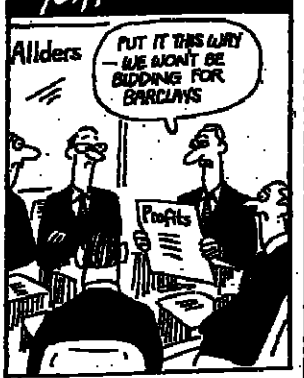
ALLDERS, the department-store chain, yesterday produced further evidence of the recession. The 39-store company, which was the first to warn of the retail slump when it issued a profits warning in August, said sales over the past two months had been almost 4 per cent down on the corresponding period last year.

Harvey Lipsith, the chief executive, described business conditions as "extremely challenging" and said he did not expect any improvement until this time next year.

"Consumer confidence is still low," he said. "I think we're in for a pretty tough year. I am not anticipating any significant improve-

ment until late in 1999, and that is assuming interest rates keep coming down."

But he remains confident about the chain's winter sales, which he said were



more important for Allders than the pre-Christmas period because the product range is concentrated on "homewares" rather than gift items.

"When times are tight the winter sale can be counted on to deliver results," he said.

Allders said the eight weeks since the end of its financial year in September had produced sales 3.7 per cent lower than last year.

This decline followed a steady worsening of the sales trend throughout the year. In the first six months, to the end of March, sales grew by nearly 7 per cent. But that dropped to less than 1 per cent in the second half of the year, and the comparison turned negative in October.

RJB deal gives hope to miners

David Gow Industrial Editor

THE future of hundreds of Midland miners' jobs was secured last night when RJB Mining announced the deal to be sold by the Government four years ago.

The private coal producer will be paid £1.4 billion over the next 10 years by Eastern, smallest of the three main fossil fuel generators, to supply five power stations.

News of the deal to supply 49 million tonnes of coal came on the eve of today's announcement by John Prescott, the deputy prime minister, of plans to revitalise mining communities hit by closures.

RJB hopes similar deals will follow with PowerGen and National Power, from which it acquired four coal-

fired plants two years ago, and that these can guarantee the jobs of all its 9000 miners.

"This is a big morale-booster," a spokesman said. Eastern had agreed to buy 12 million tonnes between April this year when the old British Coal contracts finally expired, and 2001. It has now said it will buy an extra 16 million tonnes between 1998 and 2003.

The Ipswich-based firm has also agreed to buy 21 million tonnes between 2003 and 2009 for its West Burton power station in Nottingham which is to undergo a £100 million refit to reduce the sulphur dioxide emissions associated with much UK coal.

RJB hopes that this contract will be extended to other plants by Eastern which generates about 12 per cent of Britain's electricity.

12,000 jobs may go in oil merger

Don Atkinson and Nicholas Bannister

THE MERGER between oil groups Exxon and Mobil could result in a reduction of more than 12,000 jobs — 10 per cent of the companies' combined workforce — sources close to the talks said yesterday.

Analysts in New York estimated that the deal, which would be the world's biggest industrial merger, would result in annual cost savings of between \$2.5 billion and \$5 billion, which BP hopes to save as a result of its merger with Amoco.

Exxon and Mobil have warned that there is no guarantee that their merger talks will end in success, but analysts believe that the companies will announce an agreed deal later this week. They believe that Exxon will have to offer at least \$80 billion (£48 billion) to win the backing of the Mobil board.

Last night oil prices tumbled a few cents above free-fall in the wake of last week's failed summit of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec). With Brent crude at about \$10.68 a barrel for delivery in a month, analysts feared there was nothing to stop it crashing through into single figures.

"We're clutching at straws," said one analyst, who suggested only a bitterly cold winter in North America or "obviously, a war" would do anything to stop the oil-price slide. But motorists and industry will continue to pay high prices thanks to heavy "green taxes".

Opec's Vienna summit last week failed to agree what would have been the third package of production cuts this year. The previous two had cut 2.6 million barrels a day out of Opec production, and members complied with the cuts about 80 per cent of the time. This ought to have boosted prices, but the economic meltdown in the Far East cut the ground from beneath Opec's feet. Only Libya is thought to have voted for a third round of cuts.

As a result, traders yesterday marked prices down to their lowest levels in nearly three decades. The important \$10.64 support price was breached at one point, leading pessimists to conclude that oil was diving into single figures.

Meanwhile Shell and Texaco announced yesterday that talks on a tie-up of their European marketing and manufacturing activities had been called off. They said it had become clear that shareholders would reap no extra value from the plan.

Women working for the Post Office are being bullied by resentful male colleagues

Return to gender

Mark Atkinson, Economics Correspondent

CHAUVINISTIC male postal workers are waging a campaign of intimidation against female colleagues whom they blame for rapidly changing working practices, according to government-funded research published today.

With the Royal Mail gradually switching from old-fashioned, city-centre sorting offices to automated out-of-town processing centres that place a premium on keyboard skills rather than manual labour, many more women are being recruited to fill part-time and temporary posts.

But traditional male sorting-office workers are using them as scapegoats for technological and organisational changes designed to make the Post Office more flexible and efficient, says the report.

In particular, the men blame the women for their loss of overtime. They take out their resentment by subjecting the women to sexist and boorish behaviour.

The picture of gender rivalry emerges from a study by researchers from Cardiff and Leeds universities who interviewed Royal Mail staff at all levels between 1995 and 1997 at four unidentified sorting offices.

The interviews uncovered a deeply masculine workplace culture at the traditional sorting office which was visited.

"It was cramped, workers were closely huddled together in confined working conditions; it was dirty, dark and very noisy," says the research, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

"The physical proximity between workers bred an environment that was saturated with the culture of masculin-

ty: the men shouted, laughed and sang loudly across the floor. Much of the talk was highly sexualised, and it was apparent that this was cultivated to create little doubt that this was their environment.

"There was evidence of 'game playing' with considerable time spent dodging work, escaping for a cigarette, wandering around the large multi-floor building and (allegedly) sloping off to the pub during shifts."

In this macho environment, the women interviewed said they felt intimidated and marginalised.

The isolation of the women was compounded by some managers and trade union officials who took the same stance as the male sorters, say the researchers Dr Mike Noon and Sarah Jenkins, of Cardiff Business School, and Dr Miguel Martinez Lucio, of Leeds University Business School.

In contrast to the old-fashioned sorting office, the new automated centres were much more comfortable working environments and many of the staff were adapting well to new, more flexible working practices.

Others saw change as a threat to job security in an increasingly casualised and feminised industry.

The researchers question whether management, in its drive for increased productivity, is doing enough to change the male dominated culture.

A Royal Mail spokesman said: "We are very surprised at the findings of this research because it is, quite frankly, ludicrous to suggest that female workers are not welcome in the Royal Mail."

"The findings of this report, which by its own admission relates to the mid-1990s and is based on just 200 interviews, are entirely unrepresentative of the views of the overwhelming majority of the Royal Mail's 165,000 employees."

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Post feminist

Ruth: "I had all the sexist remarks. You know, 'You should be at home in the kitchen.'"

"I mean, I really am a strong person and I found it very hard. It nearly cracked me."

Fiona: "A lot of the men don't approve of women being here. They think that if the women can't lift the bags then they shouldn't be here."

I used to unroll the lorries and the men just stood taking while I unloaded the whole lorry all on my own. I think their attitude was, if you want the job you can do it."

Katrina: "It started when I couldn't move [from my workstation] and my glasses would be gone, they'd move my handbag, my shoes would go."

"One night they tied my handbag to the frame and when it came to go home I couldn't leave because I couldn't get my bag open. It's infuriating things like that."

Varian: "At the beginning, they [supervisors] separated us if we talked, then they got used to us and the boss would let us stay together. But we were not afraid to answer back. We just said, 'No, it's not on.'"

"You can't split us up for talking when everybody talks."

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Mail chauvinism — More women now work in sorting offices and some men don't like it

PHOTOGRAPH: JACQUE CHAPMAN

News in brief

Laughton's last bow

UNITED News & Media PLC said Roger Laughton will be retiring as CEO of United Broadcasting & Entertainment at Easter next year but stays on the board as a non-executive director. He will head Media Arts and Communications at Bournemouth University. Malcolm Wall will succeed Laughton as CEO of United next Easter.

400 jobs to go at Rugby

RUGBY Group, the building materials company, is to close its joinery factories in Doncaster and Gloucester, with the likely loss of up to 400 jobs.

News of the closures was accompanied by a profits warning, which left the company's shares 5.5p down at 82.5p. "The UK joinery business has been disappointing with volumes running well below expectations," the company said.

FSA issues Lloyd's plans

THE Financial Services Authority yesterday issued proposals for regulating Lloyd's insurance market to provide its investors — 60 per cent of whom are now corporate — with the same level of protection available to other policyholders. Lloyd's said the proposals provided a template for how the market should be controlled.

Ford cutback to continue

FORD'S Dagenham car plant is to continue with four-day-a-week production because of poor demand on the Continent. The company, which had planned a return to full production after Christmas, said the situation would be evaluated "on an ongoing basis". Employees will be switched to training or maintenance on non-production days.

New deputy for Guardian

CAROLYN McCall was yesterday named deputy managing director of Guardian Newspapers. Ms McCall, who is also commercial director of the company, will work with managing director Caroline Marland to steer the Guardian and the Observer through changes including new colour pages and three new sections for the Observer.

China may help rescue Siemens' troubled Tyneside plant

Peter Heatherington, Regional Affairs correspondent

AN ELEVENTH-hour bid to save the threatened Siemens semiconductor plant near Newcastle Upon Tyne was gaining momentum

last night as the German electronics group unexpectedly halted the decommissioning of the £1 billion complex.

With production due to end last night, in preparation for final closure by the end of the year, hopes of a joint venture between Siemens and an un-

named Chinese telecommunications company were rising.

Since Siemens announced the closure in the summer, blaming over-capacity in the semiconductor market and rapidly falling prices, a task force headed by Peter Mandelson's Department of Trade

and Industry has been working overtime to save the plant, opened barely two years ago. Siemens sources indicated last night that the Prime Minister, Tony Blair — whose own North-east constituency has been hit by the closure of the Fujitsu microchip plant —

played a leading role in sewing up a possible deal during a recent visit to China. Siemens personnel director at the North Tyneside plant, Lew Avis, confirmed that scheduled decommissioning of factory equipment had been put on hold pending ne-

gotiations. But he declined to comment on potential bids or partners.

He said, significantly, that the company was cautiously optimistic about the future of the plant.

Sources close to the Government indicated that minis-

ters could be on the point of making an official announcement, although a final agreement with a partner has still to be signed.

Over the past few months staff have been leaving the plant after taking redundancy and only 600 now remain.

Smokers puff more - on black market

Imperial's profits are still on the up. Dan Atkinson reports

THE ROARING cross-channel black market in smuggled tobacco may mean cigarette consumption is actually on the increase in Britain, despite official figures showing a 7 per cent drop during the last 12 months, the huge Imperial group claimed yesterday. Chief Executive Gareth Davis said three out of every four hand-rolled cigarettes smoked in the UK are likely to have originated on the Continent.

Imperial, best-known for such brands as Lambert & Butler, John Player Special, Embassy and Regal — promised vigorous legal resistance to European

Union attempt to ban tobacco advertising and said it intended also to see off courtroom moves in Britain and Ireland to seek damages for smoking-related illnesses.

On another of the many political and legal challenges facing the industry, Imperial said it hoped for a last-minute reprieve for duty-free shopping inside the EU. Without such a stay of execution, Imperial predicted, a fifth of current duty-free cigarette sales would disappear into the legitimate and illegitimate cross-channel trade.

Despite its difficulties at home, Imperial — spun off

from the Hanson empire in October 1996 — pushed pre-tax profits in the year to September 30 from £307 million to £325 million with annual turnover up 4 per cent at £4.05 billion. British operating profits rose just 2 per cent, barely level with inflation, but overseas earnings rose 48 per cent.

Mr Davis confirmed what has long been suspected, that Imperial manages to recapture some of the profits lost on the home market by increasing deliveries to sellers on the Continent, who promptly sell on to British consumers. This is particularly true of hand-rolling tobacco, which is the easiest to smuggle.

Mr Davis said: "The vast majority of our Golden Virginia exports to Belgium

come back." In addition, he confirmed that Imperial's Drum hand-rolling brand, which is not officially on sale in this country, may be Britain's third most popular brand.

The loser, he said, was the British Government, which forfeits tax that would have been paid here. British tobaccoists and other retailers also lose out.

Along with other big tobacco groups, Imperial is a target for both legal and political action. It shuns the US market to avoid litigation in that country.

The group has four market leaders in the UK: Lambert & Butler cigarettes, Golden Virginia hand-rolling tobacco, St Bruno ready-rolled pipe tobacco and Rizla Green cigarette papers.

Housing market at standstill

Patrick Collinson

THE PROPERTY market has slowed to a near standstill, with house prices in November just 0.1 per cent higher than in October, according to figures from Nationwide Building Society released yesterday. A year ago house price inflation was running at 13 per cent per annum, but has now dropped to 6.9 per cent, with most of the fall occurring since the worldwide financial panic in August. If figures for the last three months are annualised, prices are rising by just 0.7 per cent. Next year price rises will barely match

inflation, says the society, which forecasts increases of just 2.4 per cent.

The slowdown will be greatest in the London region, with prices holding up best in the Midlands and North. But a return to the house price slump of the early 1990s is not on the cards, says Nationwide. Outside of London and the South east, markets are not overheated, affordability is still good, and there are bargain lending rates available.

London is overpriced but the rest of the country is more in equilibrium, it says, adding that house sales continue to fall and are about 8 per cent lower than during the sum-

mer. The average house price is now £66,150, compared with £61,879 a year ago, but below the peak of £66,654 of July. London estate agent Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward says it has already seen price falls of around 10-15 per cent in previously booming areas such as Islington. Sellers are now setting lower asking prices to match realistic bids.

Nationwide says that it does not expect a rerun of the arrears and repossessions crisis of the early 1990s. People are not so highly geared that they can't afford to repay loans, especially as interest rates have come down and are expected to fall again next year.

Air Traffic Control sale delay

Keith Harper, Transport Editor

THE opening of the troubled £1 billion national air traffic control centre will be delayed for another year, until the winter of 2002-3, in spite of Government assurances to the contrary, it emerged last night.

Air traffic control staff have been told by senior managers that an announcement by the Government that the centre at Swanwick, Hampshire, should open early in 2002 is optimistic. They do not think this will give them sufficient time to test the centre's new software.

The news will embarrass ministers, who want to sell 51 per cent of the national air traffic service. The delay will almost certainly stop the Government privatising the centre before the election.

Swanwick is required to handle the increase in air traffic over Britain, but the current centre at West Drayton can cope until early next decade and the Department of Transport says there is no additional risk to travellers.

More jobs endangered at acquisitive Vickers

Terry Macalister and David Gow

HUNDREDS of more jobs at Vickers were at risk last night after the defence and propulsion firm bought a Norwegian marine engineer for £304 million and said there were considerable overlaps in the two businesses.

Most at risk are employees working for Brown Brothers in Edinburgh but Vickers

chief executive Paul Buysse insisted there were opportunities for expanding the entire business.

Vickers' defence arm is in the middle of a rationalisation which will see 1,136 defence jobs going over 15 months as the Army's order for 386 Challenger 2 tanks runs down.

Yesterday's move prompted immediate speculation that Vickers would soon put its armoured vehicles division,

struggling to survive in an overcrowded market, up for sale in order to concentrate on marine propulsion.

Vickers executives denied this but company officials confirmed that it was engaged in talks with a number of other European companies about strategic alliances.

Vickers shares fell last night as analysts saw it as a less promising takeover victim itself without its cash reserves.

Gillespie's six-ball bushwhack completes victory

Australia v England: second Test, third day

Ashes sackcloth for battered England

Mike Selvey sees Stewart's underachievers beaten by own-goals before half-time in Perth

AUSTRALIA won the second Test yesterday just as they had seemed destined to do since the opening salvo put England on the canvas. Having bowled England out for 191 in the second innings, they required only 64 to win and managed it by seven wickets. The game finished 1½ hours after lunch, near enough halfway through the scheduled contest, goodness knows what the cost in lost contracts will be to the ground authority.

In the end it was the Waugh twins Mark and Steve who saw their side home but not before Darren Gough, Alan Mullally and Alex Tudor had given the opposition something to ponder before the third Test begins in Adelaide on Friday week.

Each took a wicket as Australia slumped to 38 for three, and prompted the question as to what might have happened had England batted better in the first innings, held catches — another went down yesterday, making 19 in the series — and made another hundred runs in the second.

Mark Ramprakash and Graeme Hick had taken their sixth-wicket partnership to 91, the highest of the match, before Hick was caught at third slip off Jason Gillespie's third ball of the day for 68, the game's top score.

Gillespie then embarked on a mopping-up exercise that saw him finish off the innings with a spell of four wickets for one run in six deliveries, giving him five for 89 in all, which was quite a comeback after his mauling by Hick on Sunday evening.

While the tail collapsed ignominiously in the face of some fiery bowling, Ramprakash held firm and after 4½ hours had reached 47 not out when Mullally, a batsman trying hard to make Glenn McGrath seem like Sachin Tendulkar by comparison, backed away timidly and was bowled by a full toss.

So the psychological and actual advantage rests with Australia, who will move on to Adelaide knowing that, as the holders, one more win would secure them the Ashes for two more years, whereas England need to win two of the last three games and avoid defeat in the other, and they know that the two venues Australia feared would be the most difficult for them are gone.

England can take some comfort from the fact that the series is following a pattern not unlike that last summer when they came from behind to snatch a series win over South Africa. It is not impossible that they will do the same again, just extremely unlikely.

After the match Alec Stewart, England's captain, said the batting in the first innings had been the key to the game. "It was a good pitch," he felt, "al-

though it was slightly damp on the first day, Glenn McGrath and Damien Fleming were outstanding bowlers but we did not help ourselves.

"This is a unique ground and the extra pace and bounce got some out. But we were playing at balls in areas outside off stump from where you can let them go. Those that know the ground even let straight balls go because they trust the bounce. Overall it is one of the poorest first-innings performances I can remember."

However, Stewart confessed that had England rather than Australia won the loss then in all probability he would have opted to bat first in any case, "and that would have been the wrong decision". But all the pointers pointed to that being the right thing to do,

Scoreboard

ENGLAND	
First innings	
M A Atherton c Healy b Fleming	0
M A Ramprakash c Taylor b McGrath	26
"A J Stewart c McGrath	26
M R Ramprakash c Taylor b Fleming	26
J P Crawley c M E Waugh b Gillespie	4
G A Hick c Healy b Gillespie	68
D G Cork c Taylor b Fleming	18
A J Tudor not out	11
D Gough c M E Waugh b Fleming	11
A D Mullally c Healy b Fleming	6
Extras (b2, w2, nb2)	6
Total (39 overs)	112
Fall of wickets: 2, 4, 19, 62, 74, 81, 90, 102	
Second innings	
Bowling: McGrath 16-4-37-3; Fleming 14-3-45-4; Gillespie 7-0-23-2; Miller 10-4-11-1	

AUSTRALIA	
First innings	
M A Taylor c Stewart b Cork	61
M A Ramprakash c Taylor b McGrath	15
J L Langer c Crawley b Ramprakash	36
M E Waugh c Bligh b Tudor	36
S R Waugh b Tudor	33
R T Ponting c Stewart b Tudor	11
M A Healy b Gough	12
D W Fleming c Hick b Gough	0
D Gough c Hick b Gough	0
G D McGrath c Cork b Tudor	0
Extras (b1, lb1, nb1)	24
Total (82.2 overs)	240
Fall of wickets: 51, 115, 155, 165, 206, 214, 228, 236	
Second innings	
Bowling: Gough 25-8-43-3; Cork 21-4-55-4; Tudor 21-2-40-2; Mullally 21-10-36-1; Ramprakash 2-0-12-1	

ENGLAND	
Second innings	
M A Atherton c Ponting b Fleming	1
M A Ramprakash c Taylor b Fleming	1
"A J Stewart c Taylor b Fleming	47
M R Ramprakash not out	15
J P Crawley c Langer b Miller	15
G A Hick c Ponting b Gillespie	18
D G Cork b Gillespie	18
A J Tudor c Healy b Gillespie	0
D Gough b Gillespie	0
A D Mullally b Gillespie	0
Extras (nb2)	0
Total (72.2 overs)	181
Fall of wickets: 5, 11, 15, 40, 67, 108, 158, 181	
Second innings	
Bowling: McGrath 26-10-47-0; Fleming 19-7-45-4; Gillespie 15-2-35-2; Miller 10-4-11-1	

AUSTRALIA	
Second innings	
M A Taylor c Gough	17
M A Ramprakash c Hick b Mullally	3
J L Langer c Atherton b Tudor	7
M E Waugh not out	15
S R Waugh not out	15
Extras (b2, nb2)	0
Total (32 overs)	64
Fall of wickets: 10, 24, 38, 41	
Second innings	
Bowling: Gough 9-5-18-1; Mullally 9-2-4-1; Tudor 0-0-19-1; McGrath 1-0-1-0; Harper and S Venkateshwaru	

Australia won by seven wickets.

and Mark Taylor's decision to do otherwise seems to have been a brilliant combination of experience and intuition, rather than the exercise in post-Gabba psychology that some would postulate.

"It was a 50-50 thing," said Taylor. "The local boys Geoff Marsh, Tom Moody and Justin Langer, who know the place pretty well, all thought we should bat. But this is a new Perth pitch and I thought it had a bit of grass on it and, significantly, no cracks.

"So batting last and chasing say 250 would be no more difficult than getting 250 in the first innings, especially as there were no high temperatures forecast to really crack the surface up. The pitch actually got better, especially when the new ball had gone. It always was a new-ball pitch for the bowlers."

England began the day on 126 for five, two runs shy of an innings defeat. Airline schedules were being scanned, hotel bookings checked. But such had been the exhilaration of Hick's batting on the previous evening that thoughts had turned to 1981 and another game turned by counter-attack when there was nothing to lose. This time it was not to be.

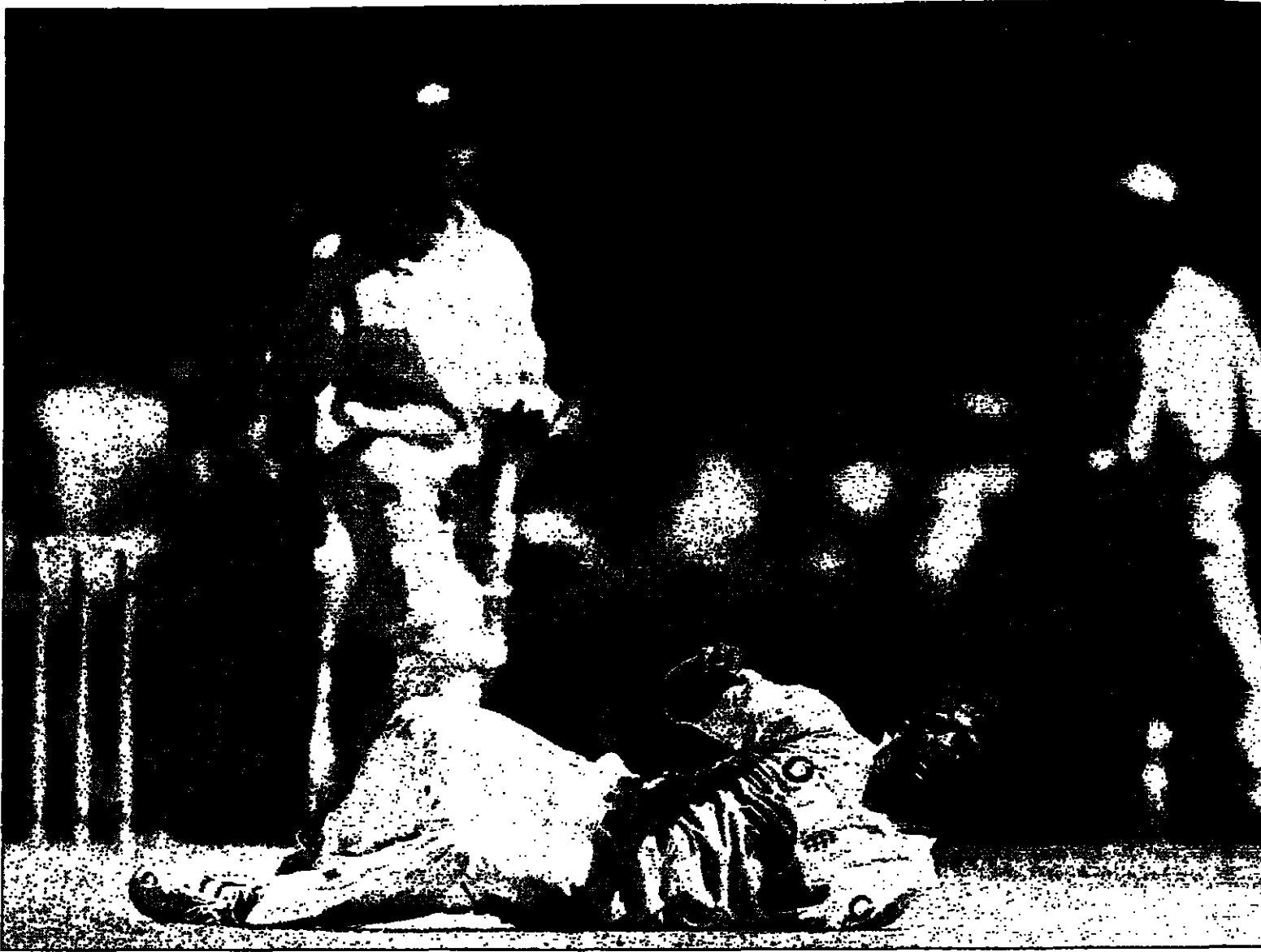
Hick's fluency was not quite what it had been and although he rattled along, reaching his half-century from only 54 balls, boundaries were becoming more involuntary. Finally, after 40 minutes' play, Gillespie replaced McGrath at the River End and made the breakthrough, as Hick, like many of his teammates, tried to force off the back foot and edged to Ricky Ponting at third slip.

Hick's innings was a genuine do-or-die effort from a fellow in his seventh Test re-instatement and batting at No. 7 who, having dropped a couple of catches and made a second-ball nought in the first innings, believed there was little to lose and everything to gain from going down with all guns blazing.

In so doing he may just have saved his Test career again. Due to go home this week, had Graham Thorpe's back not given up on him, he will now stay with the party for the rest of the winter.

Meanwhile Ramprakash had been doing what he now does regularly, which is to occupy the crease and gather runs assiduously and in no great haste, like a keen philatelist collecting stamps at auction rather than in a ram-raid on a post office.

The loss of Hick signalled the beginning of the end, however. Dominic Cork hung around for 45 minutes, taking a blow over his left eye for his trouble, but he went lbw. Tudor was caught at the wicket two balls later, Gough was another lbw victim next ball and Mullally surrendered abjectly.



Down and nearly out for the count... Darren Gough hits the deck in his eagerness to avoid the inevitability of defeat in Perth. PHOTOGRAPH: LAURENCE OFFITTS

Tudor blend gives Stewart options

Paul Allott in Perth on the positives that emerged from England's crushing defeat

THIS truncated Perth Test has been a delight for the bowlers of both sides. It has, through its 3½ days, seen the emergence and resurgence of bowling talent in the England and Australia ranks, and the quality has been exceptional.

For England, who showed some fight in their defeat, the impact of Alex Tudor may prove to be the highlight of the tour. Five wickets in the match tells only half the story; his line and composure were brilliant and he must now play in the rest of the series, with Darren Gough and Alan Mullally in support.

Any thought on the part of the selectors that Tudor is a one-match pick must be dispelled immediately, because his presence is de-

manded by team-mates and spectators alike. Quite simply he gives England an additional attacking edge.

The tourists will have learned here the importance of bowling strategy. At last, in Australia's second innings, Alec Stewart found exactly the right balance as Mullally and Gough took the new ball. For those resources may have been the original selectorial doctrine but the use of those resources is so important and the blend was seen to work.

England's bowling success in this Test will obviously be tempered by the loss of the match and, although Australia will point to their first-innings total of 240 as of great significance in their victory, it was their bowlers who did

the initial damage from which there was no escape for England.

Australia's selectors must be congratulated. They faced a fierce response from their media for leaving out Stuart MacGill, the leg-spinner, after his success in the first Test in Brisbane but were proved to be spot-on in their choices for Perth.

There were several performances to encourage the Australians, notably that of Jason Gillespie. He is acknowledged to be the quickest bowler in Australia but has been missing from the national side for 16 months with persistent back problems. But because he is fast he seems to have developed a knack of taking wickets in electrifying, staccato bursts.

John Crawley and Graeme Hick went in the space of three balls in the first innings but it was Gillespie's ruthless extin-

guishing of the tail on the third morning which finally put an end to England's resistance.

He took four wickets for one run in six balls, a statistic made all the more remarkable by the fact that he had been treated savagely by Hick the previous evening, when his analysis stood at the unremarkable no wickets for 69 from nine overs.

Gillespie is still only 22 years old but he has learned much in his short career. His delight at Hick's wicket in his first over of yesterday morning was unbounded. Revenge was sweet. If England can say they have discovered Tudor, then Australia will claim to have resurrected Gillespie.

Perhaps more remarkable than Gillespie's return was the fact that nine of England's wickets fell to Damien Fleming. England's assessment of him after

Brisbane was that he was just a doober, a throw-down merchant who would cause about as much trouble as a Western Australian fly.

He bowled superbly. Off a short run he generated good pace and was never off line, and his use of the new ball was an object lesson for any aspiring young bowler. Quite rightly he was named Man of the Match.

Watching, waiting in the wings was Glenn McGrath. He had a quiet time in terms of wickets, with only three in the match and Michael Atherton only once, but he never stopped probing and he will be a menace again soon.

England are one down but Perth has given us the prospect of an exquisite battle between these six fast bowlers for the remainder of the series. Unfortunately, if England's batsmen do not improve there will be only one winner.

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The Guardian

Pakistan v Zimbabwe: first Test

Zimbabwe claim historic victory

ZIMBABWE yesterday completed their overseas Test win when they defeated Pakistan by seven wickets with almost two days to spare in Peshawar.

Andy Flower struck the boundaries which secured their victory in the first Test and was promptly engulfed by team-mates who had raced on to the field to celebrate the success.

In recognition of visitors' historic achievement, which was their third victory since entering the Test arena in 1992, the entire Pakistan team went to Zimbabwe's dressing-room to offer their congratulations.

Zimbabwe needed a further 92 runs to win at the start of the fourth day after bowling out Pakistan for 103 on Sunday and then reaching 70 for one by the close.

They made them largely thanks to Murray Goodwin, who scored an unbeaten 73 and shared in a quickfire second-wicket stand of 81 with Grant Flower. Goodwin hit 13 boundaries and took 52 balls to reach his sixth half-century in eight Tests.

Wasim Akram did his best to impede Zimbabwe's progress with two wickets to finish with three for 47 and match figures of eight for 99.

Afterwards Zimbabwe's captain Alistair Campbell called on the international Cricket Council to allow his side to widen their Test experience.

"We have been playing Test cricket for six years now but have never met

Australia or West Indies. We have played nearly half our games against Pakistan and have also played a lot against Sri Lanka and India. It would be nice to play more against England, Australia or West Indies. It would add more variety but it's up to the ICC."

Pakistan's captain Aamir Sohail blamed his country's selectors for the latest setback, which followed their home series defeat by Australia. "They are responsible for whatever is happening to the Pakistan cricket team," he said. "They are inconsistent and don't have any clue what they want and where they are heading."

"I am a helpless fellow because they don't give weight to my suggestions, don't give me players of my choice, never visit the grounds, and announce the team without my consultation. Now I will make sure that they listen to me. Enough is enough."

Pakistan's first innings 206 (Ijaz Ahmed 67, Younis Khan 56, Waqar Younis 49, Wasim Akram 5-50, Moinuddin Durrani 4-62, Moinuddin 3-25).

Zimbabwe's first innings 238 (Moinuddin 111, Grant Flower 73, Murray Goodwin 73, Wasim Akram 5-50, Moinuddin 4-62, Moinuddin 3-25).

Pakistan's second innings 103 (Ijaz Ahmed 42, Moinuddin 3-25).

Zimbabwe's second innings 170 (Moinuddin 111, Grant Flower 73, Murray Goodwin 73, Wasim Akram 5-50, Moinuddin 4-62, Moinuddin 3-25).

South Africa v West Indies: first Test

Kallis finishes Windies job

Andy Capostagno in Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA laid the ghost of Barbados in 1992 to rest yesterday as they held their nerve to beat West Indies by four wickets in the first Test at The Wanderers.

Six years ago, on their return to Test cricket and with champagne already on ice in the dressing-room, the South Africans collected the trophy for what was their first Test win since 1992.

Curly Walsh and Courtney Walsh on the final morning, losing their last eight wickets for only 25 runs.

Yesterday, however, the home team emerged from an anxious morning session to take charge when their captain Hansie Cronje and Jacques Kallis went after the bowling.

South Africa, who needed 184 to win, reached the lunch interval at 77 for three off 37 overs but the next seven overs yielded 47 runs as Cronje and Kallis took the match away from the West Indies.

Cronje was fortunate to escape on 17 when he was caught at silly mid-on off an Ambrose no-ball and although he made only another 14 runs before he asked Walsh to fine leg the mood of the innings had been changed.

Ambrose and Walsh had earlier picked up a wicket each as South Africa slipped to 14 for two. And when Daryll Cullinan was brilliantly caught at midwicket by Stuart Williams for 35 the home side were uneasily placed at 58 for three.

With an unbeaten 57, his second half-century in a low-scoring match, Buthe the Man of the Match Shaun Pollock missed the chance to hit the winning run when he flicked an Ambrose full toss straight to square leg with the scores level.

West Indies had made only 170 in their second innings and their captain Brian Lara conceded: "We've got to improve on that."

Success was particularly sweet for Cronje and Allan Donald, survivors from the South Africa team that lost in Barbados, the only previous Test meeting between the two countries. "We were very young and inexperienced on that day, but 50 Tests down the line we're probably more experienced now," said Cronje.

To rub salt into West Indies' wound yesterday the entire team were fined 10 per cent of their match fee by the referee Marjan Madugalle for their slow over-rate in South Africa's first innings.

WEST INDIES First innings 261 (S Chandrasekhar 74, Pollock 6-54).

SOUTH AFRICA First innings 268 (S Pollock 52, Walsh 4-58).

WEST INDIES Second innings 170 (Pollock 4-49).

SOUTH AFRICA Second innings 164 (S Pollock 14, 58, 124, 146, 163, 181, 191, 201, 211, 221, 231, 241, 251, 261, 271, 281, 291, 301, 311, 321, 331, 341, 351, 361, 371, 381, 391, 401, 411, 421, 431, 441, 451, 461, 471, 481, 491, 501, 511, 521, 531, 541, 551, 561, 571, 581, 591, 601, 611, 621, 631, 641, 651, 661, 671, 681, 691, 701, 711, 721, 731, 741, 751, 761, 771, 781, 791, 801, 811, 821, 831, 841, 851, 861, 871, 881, 891, 901, 911, 921, 931, 941, 951, 961, 971, 981, 991, 1001).

Ice Hockey

Netminder on way back says Knights coach

Wie Batscheider

JIM FUYARCHUK, London Knights' coach, yesterday denied rumours that his No. 1 netminder Sonny Mignacca is to leave the club after missing several recent games through injury.

Mignacca was again absent for Sunday's 5-2 defeat in Manchester when Ken Wooters of the English League side Oxford acted as back-up to Mark Cavallin, who had begun the season as Mignacca's deputy. And he will not be risked for tonight's Superleague game against Cardiff Devils at the London Arena when Wooters will again be Cavallin's back-up.

"Sonny's just around the corner from coming back," said Fuyarchuk. "We have no changes planned in that department right now."

The Knights face a tough challenge tonight, with Cardiff coming off a two-win weekend having beaten Ayr (7-4) and Nottingham (6-1) at home to go second, six points behind the leaders Manchester but with three games in hand. "Those were points we had to pick up. If we're to make any sort of challenge we have to win our home games," said the Devils' coach Paul Heavey.

"It was also a good bonus to get so many goals," he added, putting them ahead of Nottingham on goal difference.

Having released the Canadian defender Rory Mullin, Cardiff's title aspirations were not improved when their British defenceman Jason Stone broke a leg against Ayr. "We're going to have to find two players," said Heavey.

Cycling

Festina face judgment day over drugs

William Fotheringham

EVIDENCE of the synthetic blood-thinner erythropoietin (EPO) was found in the systems of eight of the nine Festina riders thrown off the Tour de France in July, including the four-times King of the Mountains Richard Virenque, results of a police inquiry in Lille will show today.

Four of the nine also had amphetamines in their blood, including Christophe Moreau, the only one whose EPO result was "inconclusive". Although he has already confessed to using the hormone and is currently serving a ban for taking steroids.

Virenque, the Tour runner-up in 1997, the 1997 world champion Laurent Brochard and Pascal Hervé will today hear from Judge Patrick Kall the results of the investigation started when a Festina car containing a large supply of banned drugs was stopped on the Franco-Belgian border in July.

A source authorised by the police inquiry yesterday revealed that Virenque and Hervé, who have always denied knowingly using banned drugs, had blood counts indicating synthetic EPO. Five of the nine would have failed the UCI tests by which riders are removed from races for their own safety.

The four riders believed to have shown traces of amphetamines are Moreau, Hervé, Brochard and the 1997 Tour stage winner Didier Rous.

The test results of blood, hair and urine samples have taken four months to arrive from Toxlab, an independent laboratory in Paris.

SportsGuardian

Johnson loses out in Everton power struggle

Ian Ross on a day of ultimatums for Walter Smith, who won the tug of war at Goodison

EVERTON'S bitter power struggle ended in victory for the manager Walter Smith yesterday when the chairman Peter Johnson bowed to internal and external pressure and resigned.

Johnson also confirmed that he is actively seeking to sell his controlling interest, which almost certainly signals the end of his 11 years in football.

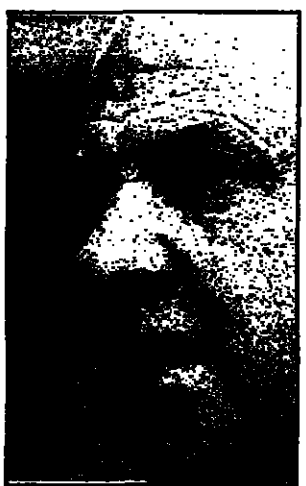
Smith had made it clear that he would resign, only five months after his installation, unless Johnson acknowledged that the manager had had no knowledge of last week's £28 million sale of the striker Duncan Ferguson to Newcastle United.

Johnson belatedly did so yesterday, and Smith agreed to stay on at Goodison Park. But he immediately let it be known that his working relationship with the 39-year-old multimillionaire had suffered irreparable damage in the days after Ferguson's move and that either he or the chairman would have to go.

Five hours after issuing a statement confirming that Ferguson had been sold behind Smith's back, Everton issued a second press release to announce that Johnson's 44-year reign was at an end.

In the short term he will be replaced as chairman by the 71-year-old Sir Philip Carter, who took the role in the Eighties when Everton enjoyed the most successful period in their history.

The man most likely to buy out Johnson, the Everton director and theatrical impresario Bill Kenwright, has moved up to vice-chairman. Johnson will remain on the board as a non-executive di-



Johnson... 68 per cent stake

rector until he can sell his 68 per cent shareholding.

The club statement said of Johnson: "The role of chairman has been particularly difficult to carry out since he moved to Jersey earlier this year and the increased pressure has led to health concerns."

Although Smith is happy to remain at Everton in the hope of overseeing a long overdue renaissance in the club's fortunes, he came perilously close to quitting.

Last Friday he met Johnson in London and told him he would resign unless the chairman issued a statement conceding that he himself, not the manager, was responsible for the departure of the jewel in Everton's crown.

Although Smith immediately drew up the statement, it was not released until yesterday lunchtime, a delay which almost cost Everton their manager.

The statement, issued on

behalf of both Smith and Johnson, finally acknowledged that Ferguson was auctioned off to the highest bidder to reduce Everton's £20 million overdraft.

There was also a belated apology to Smith, who learned of the deal only after bumping into Ferguson shortly after Everton defeated Newcastle in a Premiership game at Goodison.

"It is regretted that he learned of the final agreement reached regarding Duncan Ferguson in the manner he did," said the statement. "After four months in the manager's seat, having spent £20 million on six new players, bringing the squad total to 35, Walter Smith assumed his playing staff and discussed with the chairman his plans for the future."

"Having seen the manager's report, the chairman emphasised the requirement to sell players to return the squad to reasonable proportions. The club had received a substantial offer for Duncan Ferguson earlier in the season, which was rejected. The chairman and manager agreed that any future offer should be given serious consideration."

A substantial offer was received from Newcastle United which was discussed with that club's representatives immediately before and during the course of last Monday's game. Their discussions resulted in an agreement being reached at that time."

Twelve months ago, when it was first suggested that Johnson would sell up, he was asking upwards of £50 million for the stake which cost him only £19 million back in the summer of 1994. But his desire to rid himself of what he now regards as a poisoned chalice is such that he may now be willing to accept about £50 million, a figure which Kenwright will be confident of raising.

Gillespie on a high down under



Next one, please... Jason Gillespie sends back Darren Gough first ball LAURENCE GRIFFITHS

Hick cancels flight home as England fold in Perth

GRAEME HICK looks set to spend his winter down under after all, but whether that is a blessing or a curse remains to be seen in view of England's dismal seven-wicket defeat in Perth yesterday which leaves Australia needing to win one of the remaining three Tests to retain the Ashes.

England's captain Alec Stewart will discuss Hick's position with the tour manager Graham Gooch, coach David Lloyd and the selector Mike Gatting, who arrived in Perth three days ago to play in a benefit match.

Hick was due to fly back to England yesterday but will stay on for the rest of the tour if Graham Thorpe continues to suffer from a back complaint. The Worcestershire batsman was thrust into the second Test at the last minute but his second innings 68 off 73 balls at the Waca was the highest score of the match.

Once he had gone, though, England's tail was shredded by Jason Gillespie, who after being mauled by Hick on Sunday evening exacted terrible revenge by taking the last four wickets in six balls for one run. After that an Australia victory was inevitable, even though they lost three wickets in reaching the 64-run target.

Mike Selvey, page 14

Happiness is a full bladder down under



Jim White

ACCORDING to Jonathan Agnew, commenting on Australian cricket, the second Test was a match in which no one wanted to disappear off to the toilets for fear of missing a piece of vital action.

Five minutes away from your position and a couple of wickets would be taken, or Graeme Hick would astonish everyone with a six, or Mark Ramprakash would have the kind of altercation with an opponent which looked unlikely to be resolved over a pint at the end of the day's play.

Such suspense was causing major problems on the Waca terraces where those England fans who feel the need to be loud had set up camp. There seemed to be no one up there who was not watching without legs crossed against the outgoing tide.

Indeed, there can be no collective noun better to describe those gathered in the noisy sections of the Waca than a bladder of fans. Never in my time watching sport have I witnessed as much beer consumed as I saw on Sunday as the Barry Army and their equally thirsty local counterparts took on board gallons of liquid atmosphere. The Titanic could have been refloated on the amount one Englishman, a shouty youth wearing a Manchester City shirt and a face rapidly turning United red in the sun, consumed on his own.

Those who follow England on overseas tours, it seems, fall into two distinct types: the bladder, who turn up under their own steam and sleep wherever they can find a horizontal surface. And those at the other end of the market, mother-henned in package-tour parties by former players turning a handy little earner in their retirement. In deference to their favoured form of luggage, with which they transport their paraphernalia to the ground, these might be called a plastic-carrier-bag of fans.

Neither grouping has any expectation of seeing its team win, so they would not have been surprised yesterday when their team slid to a seven-wicket defeat in 24 days. Neither expects anything more from its hosts than the kind of smug gloating

summed up by the tea-shirt bearing the legend: "We're not arrogant, we're just better than you." Yet their reactions to English misfortune could not be more different.

The bladder barely notices England's suffering on the pitch, apparently convinced all will have been worth while as long as they out-perform their rivals in the decibel Ashes.

They scour the crowd for Australians with that short-at-the-sides-long-at-the-back hairstyle favoured by English cricketers in the Eighties, which for reasons lost in the mist of drink is known as the Mullet. Sadly their Mullet antennae often lack the accuracy of Australia's bowlers: on Sunday two of their victims turned out to be in Leeds.

Meanwhile, up in the stands, the carrier-bag tut and cluck, moan and whinge, telling anyone who will listen that, if the selectors had followed their advice, all would have been well. And in the evenings they gather in the village pubs to discuss the day with former playing heroes, full of advice for the current contestants.

Kim Hughes is one. He makes something of a living these days on the motivational speaking circuit in Australia. He has been in the tough survive and that England are not tough and therefore will not. As a former captain of Australia who broke down in front of some hostile bouncers in a press conference he should know.

THE maelstrom of advice swirling around Perth — bat this way, bowl that, be mentally tough but always have a drink in hand just in case — was enough to bring tears to David Lloyd's eyes — though not perhaps as much as on the first time he came to the city on England duty back in 1974. On that occasion Jeff Thomson hit him in the groin with a ball travelling at over 90mph.

In those days batsmen did not have the sophisticated protection they waddle out to the middle in now. According to Lloyd he faced Thomson wearing something which resembled a plastic soap-dish. As the ball hit him, he went down as if under sniper fire from the stands but, as he was carried to the dressing-room, Lloyd did not fail to spot the potential of the moment as an after-dinner anecdote.

As the doctor attended to his injury, England's then opening bat showed the kind of humour reserves he would later need as coach of his country: "Would it be possible," he asked, "to give me something to take the pain away but keep the swelling?"

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Guardian Crossword No 21,446
Set by Taupi

Across

- 1 Turn good guy into wag — what sauce? (7)
- 2 Splendid display of leaf-insect (7)
- 3 Flier's first through height (7)
- 4 House holding an orchid (7)
- 5 Not a volunteer to study writing (8)
- 6 Announced the quiet bit (5)
- 7 Hands over form of agreement for bed (5)
- 8 Courage of everyone in supporting structure (5)
- 9 One who wouldn't have power broker? (5)
- 10 Vessel for sauce if up-ended (5)
- 11 It's drawn to answer (5)
- 12 Exert pressure on blockhead to be unarmoured (5)
- 13 Shellfish needs salt only (7)

Down

- 1 Hideous force quickly drops one (7)
- 2 Spot for rearing deer and mushrooms (7)
- 3 Stripe about bird takes this shape (7)
- 4 Hard-wearing cross out in part of church (7)
- 5 Copse gives clue to desire (7)
- 6 Top level for tact disagreement (5)
- 7 The continental double-barrelled weapon (5)
- 8 What a switch might turn on? (5)
- 9 Ship-to-shore communication (5)
- 10 Complaint in metal work (7)
- 11 Essay covering old drama (7)
- 12 Source of stork, coot, larks (5)
- 13 Put light out with care when drowsy (5)

17 May be got for each he/pence (7)

18 Offence of unwelcome guest, say, turning up (7)

20 Vehicle wheeling rubbish wagon (7)

21 Any lock can be calm (7)

23 Reverberation sustains reverse note (5)

24 Jack said opposite to 1 down (5)

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the way of things in the not-so-distant past, this once-unknown, unreflected and without fanfare. It came in the form of the front pages of last Wednesday's New York Times, and it showed a puff-bled teenage girl wiping away a tear from her left eye. But this was not a picture of just any tearful teenager. The headline read "Charles's Heartbreak" and the subhead "Romance ends for stressed First Daughter."

The news that Chelsea Clinton had broken up with her boyfriend Matthew Broderick had shown up in tears at Stanford University's stress medical center complaining of stress narked something more than the end of a teenage romance. It marked another chapter in the corruption of American innocence and it was excruciating — news that will come as no surprise to the British — by a tabloid newspaper owned by Rupert Murdoch.

Until last week, the American press had an unwritten but strictly observed pact with the White House. The terms were clear and straightforward: Chelsea Clinton was off-limits. The children of political leaders are never wholly out of the public eye, of course, no matter how assiduously their parents try to protect them. And there have been presidential daughters in the White House before — Caroline Kennedy, Julie Nixon Eisenhower, and even Carter among them — in recent decades. But those earlier young women grew up in a less intrusive age, however controversial their fathers may have been.

Nevertheless, for six years, Chelsea has been protected from media intrusion by a generally honoured agreement. From the moment that she came to Washington from Arkansas as a shy 12-year-old with braces on her teeth, she was able to live behind a wall of silence. While her parents' every public move was scrutinised and interpreted on a daily basis, the First Daughter was able to grow up away from the limelight. She went to local fee-paying schools, but no paparazzi followed her there each day. She hung out with her friends in Georgetown and the suburbs, had weekend sleepovers at their places and even at the White House. She shopped in the local malls with her mum. All of it, more or less, without prying glasses and media attention.

In claim that Chelsea was invisible would be to stretch the claim too far. Neither the White House press office nor the Washington media was or is above temptation and, from time to time, she would appear on family photographs and occasionally at White House functions. There were even stories, invariably anonymous about Chelsea's dance classes, her affection for the White House cat, socks, and about her apparent wish to study medicine and go forth to do good works after she graduates from Stanford.

The pact ended last week when the Post broke the taboo, quoting "friends at Stanford" who said that Chelsea had checked in to the medical centre on Monday last week "complaining of shortness of breath and clutching her forehead".

She was rubbing her temples and was breathing "noisily," the Post source claimed. She said she was under a bit of stress, then she mentioned shed just ended a long-term relationship and that it was causing her a lot of distress. She kept saying "I'm not adjusting well," over and over.

What happened next was the familiar process of media recycling, into which even those who disapproved were drawn. The Associated Press news agency picked up the story and put out a version on its wires. It was picked up by radio stations across the United States, which ran with it for several hours. In the meantime, other print, electronic papers, the story was then picked up and then picked up by the media correspondents and reword as a tale about press values, though all key details supplied.

In less scrupulous Britain, the original Post story was simply reproduced in its own right. Carol Thatcher in the Daily Mail led the way with a "Dear Chelsea... I've been there too" open letter.

The fact that Chelsea may now be treated as fair game by the media is the latest example of this year's gradual and very painful convergence between tabloid media culture and the much more high-minded broadsheet dailies.

Speaking to the White House press corps on the day after the Post story, President Clinton's new press spokesman, Joe Lockhart, was full of predictable condemnation. "The journalistic standards of some of the tabloids speak for themselves," Lockhart said. "I wouldn't consider the New York Post part of the media."

This isn't a distinction that Lockhart's Downing Street counterpart,



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Bob Roth

For 30 years, Paul Theroux had a close friend in fellow writer V S Naipaul. Now they don't talk. Dina Rabinovitch talks to Paul Theroux about the legacy of their broken friendship

Poison pen pals

Paul Theroux has an easy manner, sliding in the rather chummy atmosphere of a London hotel bar, jetting me — grinning like a kid with his hand in the cookie jar — of the "little liberty" he took in his latest book, *Sir Vidia's Shadow*.

The publishers don't know about it, the book-buying public doesn't know — not do the American and British reviewers and gossip writers who have been frothing over this tale of the broken friendship of two writers. Theroux, 56, and his one-time mentor, 10 years older than him, the Booker Prize winner Sir V S Naipaul.

Early on in *Sir Vidia's Shadow*, Theroux describes a scene where he and Naipaul encounter an eight-year-old Indian girl. Theroux describes the meeting in detail, mentioning the girl's name, whose teacher's gesture made the girl recall and scowl at the servant in a brassy way. Theroux describes Naipaul's reaction: "What a horrible child," Vidia said, looking away. "He continues: 'Time is so strange in his logic and revelation... after 30 years passed (and Pat [Naipaul's wife] lay dying) ... Vidia would meet the girl again, now grown up and divorced... and all in love. How were we to know that little girl hiding behind the Naipauls' was the future Lady Naipaul?"

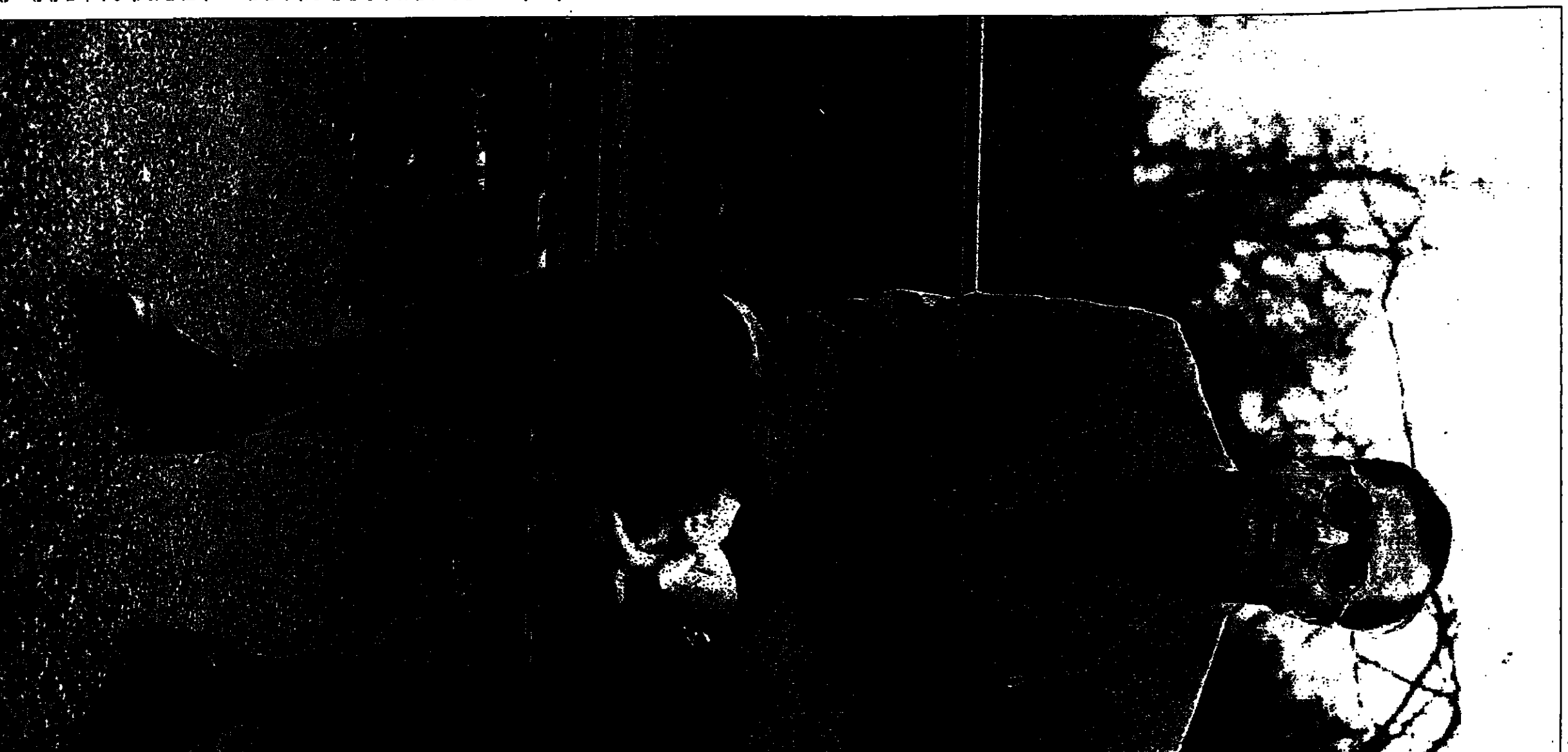
Like a weird, last 11, I say to Theroux. "Oh, that's my little liberty," he replies. "That's a liberty I took in the book — it didn't really happen." He's looking at me to share the joke, but I can see from his face that he has just registered the attack on mine. The whole premise of the book is that it is not, and the lies about the new Lady Naipaul are surely required to be the most rigorous since she is ostensibly the reason for Naipaul's breaking his 20-year friendship with Theroux — not to mention neglecting the first Lady Naipaul and abandoning his lover of some 20 years, Margaret.

Any other liberty? I ask. "Look," he replies, "she was in East Africa then, we were in East Africa then. The meeting was possible. It was highly likely I didn't call her 'little liberty' because I always said, 'I knew if I had seen her, I'd have just married. Oh, God! It's my one Nigerian liberty!'"

For the literary world, Sir Vidia's shadow is the up-market, sensational, equivalent of reading about, say, Charles and Di, and it will be heavily bought. It's the underbelly of a certain kind of writing, the everyday mechanism of detailing other people's foibles, but here without the veil of fiction. There has been much speculation about what advance Theroux obtained. "I don't remember," he tells me. "Honestly. Because this is part of a three-book deal. The next is a book about money, and a collection of essays, called *Fresh Air*. I think that's me."

"Fortunately I can't remember the amount," he continues. "A writer called James Joyce Hemmings, it said in the paper, got £40,000 to write a life of I think, Charlie Chaplin. A week after that was printed, three workmen knocked on his door, tied him up and tortured him, asking where the money was. They thought he had the £40,000 stuffed under a cushion, and they killed him. They didn't realise that you get a third on signature, a third on delivery and a third on publication, or that you pay taxes on it and your agent gets 10 per cent."

The big question is how the details, since — as he reveals in the book — he stopped keeping a diary at the age of 24, when Naipaul told him that day, writing would hamper the real writing. "When you're a young writer in the presence of a greater writer, you're wired," he says. "You have an acute memory for each encounter."



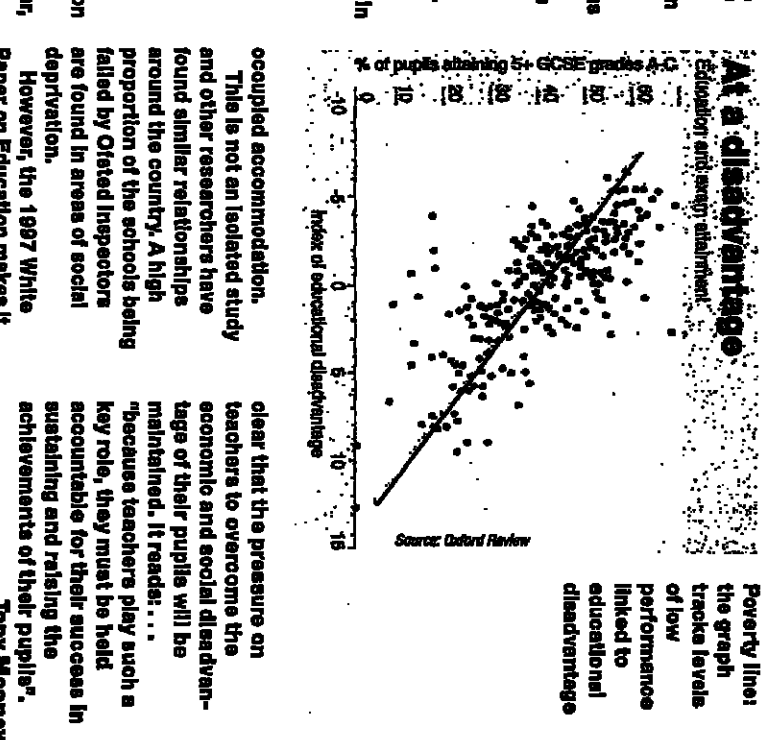
Sitting comfortably? Parents want to be sure their children are happy at school

Highs and lows of achievement

The graph shows just how closely school exam results are linked to the poverty or prosperity of their pupils. It plots the percentage of children gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE against an index of educational disadvantage. Each dot is a school — clearly the more disadvantaged the area, the more likely it is to be at the bottom right of the graph with comparatively low performance.

I believe the publication of league tables has played a significant role in lowering teacher morale. The tables have helped to create a climate in which observers gain the impression that a school's examination results are solely dependent on the quality of the headteacher and teaching staff. Estelle Morris, the education minister, has warned that "poverty cannot be an excuse for failure".

Of course research has shown that schools can make a difference to their pupils' achievement. Grateful politicians have made use of this finding to argue that schools and teachers are the cause of the nation's indifferent education performance and that family disadvantage takes a back seat. But a study by Alex Gibson of Exeter University and Sheena Asthana of Plymouth University in the Oxford Review of Education shows that over 75 per cent of between-school variance in the proportion of pupils achieving five or more grades A to C at GCSE is explained by variance to the socio-economic background of the pupils.



Poverty limits the graph of low performance linked to educational disadvantage. clear that the pressure on teachers to overcome the economic and social disadvantages of their pupils will be maintained. It reads: "... because teachers play such a key role, they must be held accountable for their success in sustaining and raising the achievements of their pupils". Tony Mooney

Don's delight



Sue Vice on Elie Wiesel's *Night* — the book that changed her life

I first read Elie Wiesel's *Night* when I was 15. I think it was one of the first words of Holocaust literature I'd come across, and I remember re-reading it obsessively as if it would make better sense the more I read it. *Night* tells the story of Eliezer — who aged 15 — who is deported from a ghetto in a remote part of Hungary to Auschwitz, where he is separated from his mother and three sisters and sent to work as a slave labourer with the father. When I first read it, I was especially struck by the shocking images, particularly overnight — as the title suggests — in Eliezer's life. One day he was a devout Chasid, son of a pillar of the Jewish community; the next he was forced to readjust his relationship with his father in a death camp, and to doubt the existence of the God who had previously enriched his wedding hours.

The central character of *Night* doesn't have the same name as the author which conveys the huge rift in Wiesel's life and the distance from his past self. Autobiographies are usually about life, and end with a new beginning. *Night* ends with the death of a self.

Night tells of events which are repeated in many other Holocaust works, but which seem unusually gripping when you first learn of them. Having survived the initial threat of gassing, the prisoner in *Night* suffers starvation, random punishments and hangings, death marches, and the breakdown of family relations.

Eliezer narrates how he and his father rebel on each other and ultimately look the part. The father grows ill and weaker after the death march to Bergen-Belsen in 1945, and Eliezer feels a sickening mixture of hatred for the world and relief when his father eventually dies. He says he felt something like "Free at last!"

I often re-read *Night* in order to teach it. Since its publication a new generation of Holocaust texts have arisen which experiment with form and ways of telling to represent their particular content (such as *Set* Spiegelman's cartoon, *Walse*, and *Pin's* blurred memory, *A Strap of Time*), but *Night* is still a simple, classic tale of the Auschwitz world.

Elie Wiesel's *Night* is available in a Penguin edition. Sue Vice lectures in English and also teaches on the MA in Holocaust Studies at Stroud University.

Education



Learning curve

David Shayler recalls his debut in the national headlines — ten years ago

The current spat with his former MI6 employee is not the first escape David Shayler has been in for blowing the whistle.

As editor of the Dundee University newspaper a decade back, he dramatised an exposé of medical student infidelity on the pages of the Dundee University newspaper and "Naked Organs of the Young" were two tabloid spin headlines to go with the accounts of male freeriding bionomics rammed up their bionomics and photos of them leashed related to crosses.

Far from impressed that the young student editor had transformed the moribund *Annasch* — Gaelic for "novel, dainty and uncommon" — into a vibrant organ with Fleet Street credibility, the university principal bawled him into his office.

"He wanted to kick me out. He said I'd brought the university into disrepute. I think it's a hell of a lot of a nice parallel with my situation now with MI6."

"I replied: 'Don't expect the message if you've got a problem in your university, you must sort it out.'"

Somehow Shayler survived, but the oddest thing was that some time before breaking the medical story he had run great chunks of Peter Wright's *Spycatcher* in *Annasch*, during the period that the book was outlawed in the UK.

"Nobody said anything. The university did nothing although the student union tried to sack me as editor."

Several years later when MI6 were recording him as a clean to them about having published *Spycatcher* except.

"They asked why I had. I said I didn't think it was the business of the security service to go around disabbling democratic government. They agreed, saying *Spycatcher* wasn't truthful and Peter Wright had made it up."

He spent the last two years at Dundee totally immersed in the newspaper, taking advice from a Sun reporter — a friend of the mum's — about improving it. He lived in the newsroom, sleeping on a camp bed.

Shayler graduated in English lit, but he had told tutors he wanted to major in French to be allowed to take his third year out in France, where he got a teaching job. "My French really improved and there's come in very useful recently."

Peter Kingston

The hot seats of learning

Despite the high profile enjoyed by the UK government's controversial school performance tables, **John Grace** finds parents consider far more than academic results when choosing a secondary school — facilities, a friendly atmosphere, the standard of pastoral care, and discipline all come into the equation

Everyone knows what they want from a secondary school. They want a school with a good academic reputation; one where their child will be intellectually and emotionally fulfilled; within walking distance, with a happy, friendly atmosphere where their child will not come into contact with drugs and a school from which their child can go on to higher education or a fulfilling job.

And pigs might fly. So, inevitably, almost everyone has to settle for less.

The Conservative government introduced secondary school league tables in 1992, and the present government has maintained them as part of "the Secretary of State's commitment to give people as much information as possible about the schools in their local community. They mean that parents can make informed choices when they are considering a school for their child."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, says many parents find the league tables meaningless. "Many families don't have the transport to get their children to a school several miles away, and have no option but to send them to the nearest school."

However, the league tables have affected how parents select schools. There is a great deal of anecdotal evidence from both parents and schools, that those schools topping the league — or coming close to it — are getting many more prospective parents at their open days than during the pre-league era.

Research has also indicated that, even though many parents realise the league tables only tell a partial story of academic attainment, as the tables make no allowances for

socio-economic or cultural differences between schools, they are still privileged against schools that come in the bottom half.

Few parents, though, choose a school purely on its league table results. What the tables have done is to give education a higher profile and to encourage people to focus more clearly on what it is they do want from a school.

Dr Diane Keay, research fellow at Kings College, London, thinks that the league tables have had a slight democratising effect. "Middle-class parents always tended to make sure they were informed about the schools in their area," she says. "The attention given to the league tables — particularly in the local press — has encouraged many working-class parents to take a more active role in school selection."

Dieta Hearn, head at Edgware School, a north London comprehensive, believes the league tables are something of a sideshow.

"But when it came down to actually filling in our preferences on the form, we felt we had to compromise. The school we really wanted to send our son to only selected its intake on the basis of an exam; the school we opted for selected on the basis of an exam and interview. We felt this would give our son more chance if he did not do so well in the exam. Ultimately, we felt it was more important to ensure he didn't go to a really bad school than to try to get him into the very best."

So, despite league tables, it all seems to come down to what most parents have always suspected. It's really the parents that choose the schools, it's the schools that choose the parents.

'Parents should not be frightened to ask the awkward questions'

But all agree choosing a secondary school is one of the most stressful events in a parent's life. Susanah Layton is trying to find a school for her 10-year-old son. Susanah Layton is not her real name; she and her husband are so anxious about the whole process that she did not want any prospective school to identify her in case it affected the outcome.

"Our sons' primary school has a policy of being non-judgmental about all the schools in the area," she says. "This is fine in theory, but in practice it has meant that we have felt like we're out on a limb. We have taken account of league tables in our selection process, but as important has been whether our son would be happy, the standard of pastoral care and the attitudes and discipline record of the school."

"But when it came down to actually filling in our preferences on the form, we felt we had to compromise. The school we really wanted to send our son to only selected its intake on the basis of an exam; the school we opted for selected on the basis of an exam and interview. We felt this would give our son more chance if he did not do so well in the exam. Ultimately, we felt it was more important to ensure he didn't go to a really bad school than to try to get him into the very best."

Writer's book... The new spouse is a bridge-burner. They have brooms, they take charge! PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ODWIN

reaction to his book was caught up with the reporting on Clinton. "As though I was tape-recording Naipaul and rilling on him, as if I was invading his privacy." He doesn't know whether Naipaul has read the book, though he would like to find out. "I don't have a current phone number," he says, "but I can find out. I'll tell them I told you to phone."

Apart from one meeting, Theroux has had no contact with Naipaul since he remarried in 1996. He says that he has heard that Naipaul is now a happy, contented man. "People talk of a new Naipaul, a smiling, hand-holding, serene Naipaul. He travels a lot with his wife."

Theroux feels this marriage effectively ended their friendship. "It's got a new friend," he tells me, in the present tense, "and I've got to realise that. The new spouse is a bridge-burner. They have brooms, they take charge." The new Lady Naipaul began selling off first edition Theroux novels that Theroux had given as gifts to Naipaul. Theroux faxed his friend to ask him about this, and received an acrimonious answer from Lady Naipaul, which Theroux answered equally acutely.

In his book a description of the end of a friendship, or is it an answering blow in the ending of that friendship? "It's not the last blow. It's not saying 'take that'; it's more considered," says Theroux. "The friendship was over when Naipaul said to me [when Theroux accidentally met him in London, and asked whether Naipaul, who had not answered any of Theroux's letters or calls, knew of the exchange of faxes]. 'Take it on the chin and move on.' The night after that accidental meeting, Theroux set down to write *Sir Vidia's Shadow*.

Shadow has three meanings. First, one can be in the shadow of a greater man; second, you can shadow a person, meaning, keep track of him, and third, a shadow can be an alternate, as in the Shadow Minister. The Naipaul that Theroux reveals in *Sir Vidia's Shadow* is an unpleasant character — one reviewer said Theroux reveals himself in the book to share some of Naipaul's sneering and snobbish traits.

In the three hours he struck me as one of those people who would not understand why anybody might think ill of him, unless such thought was motivated by jealousy.

Theroux told me, "I've reviews in the States, that attacked the book, were all by women. Women place higher store on someone revealing details of a friendship than a man would."

This seemed a little odd to me, as many of the men I had spoken to about the book seemed quite alive to the question of betrayal. I told him their names. "Oh, but they're writers," he said. "It's a strange thing about one's success — people feel overshadowed."

Paul Theroux will meet Sir Vidia's Shadow at the Royal National Theatre's Lyttelton Theatre, London SE1 on Thursday at 8pm. Box office: 0171-482 3000.

Bring me sunshine

Is the BBC about to trade in its grey Met Office forecasters for a new generation of telegenic Scandinavian blondes? Not if **Stuart Jeffries** can help it. Launching his **Save Our Weathermen** campaign, he says we must learn to love Michael Fish



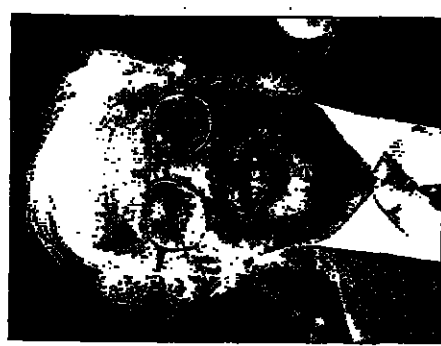
Tomorrow's outlook... the forecast in more Urlick Jenson (above) and less Michael Fish (left)

better job description? Some will carp and cowl, and say Michael Fish is hardly reliable. They will say public confidence in TV weather people is at an all-time low so something must be done. Indeed, new research from Birmingham University suggests TV presenters are terrible at forecasting the weather. Dr John Thomson contends that the predictions of TV forecasters are little better than could be achieved by any ordinary member of the public.

Big deal. We don't watch the weather to get tips about the weather. We watch it to see a reassuring image of incompetence and sartorial disaster on screen. The appeal is similar to that of EastEnders: there everybody is so miserable, grey and unhappy that it cannot but back one up to spend half an hour at Albert Square each day.

Better yet, weather forecasts are so hopeless at forecasting the weather they fulfil another national function. They help us to blame other people for our misfortune. It is every Briton's birthright to moan. We all know the weather reports are likely to be wrong and that, really, we would do better to consider our corns in the morning before deciding to hang out our washing after listening to Sir Llyod. But we don't and so we can happily blame Sir Llyod for something that is not his fault.

Of course, none of this applies to Suzanne Charlton. She is the daughter of Sir Bobby and also a national institution who is often on target. Dr Thomson says her predictions are more accurate than those of her colleagues. "There is a reason for this, it is because of the flappling weather vane of a comb-over that she has inherited from her father. Not many people know this, but Suzanne stands on the roof of the London Weather Centre with a long strand of hair flapping in the breeze. From the information that is communicated to this weather vane, she compiles the only weather forecasts on which we can rely. Long may she and her less prescient colleagues continue."



Michael Fish and more Norwegians in blinns.

All this sunshine is a terrible development which we Britons should resist. We must prize our drizzle (the noun) and press our Fisher close to our bosoms. We should stop trying to be happy and promoting the careers of bland good-looking people. Instead, there must be a corner of Britain that is forever reserved for such badly-dressed men (and women) who command next to no public respect, but torrents of public affection.

Michael Fish and his colleagues know very little about blinns, and what's more, they don't know all that much about blinns either. But neither of these points worries me. Britain has no business knowing about blinns or in displaying professional competence. Otherwise, it would not be Britain.

To my mind, Michael Fish is a fine role model. As I grow old, I too hope to wear ill-favoured check jackets, grow unconcerned facial hair to distract from my bald pate and misinform millions of people on a daily basis. Could there be a

We don't watch it for tips about the weather — we watch for a reassuring image of incompetence and social disaster

6/APPPOINTMENTS

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PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILITOE



Rebecca's grand-mother, Lolita (below), pictured on her way to trial in 1954, grabbed the headlines when she opened fire on the US Congress. She thought her actions would get her shot instead she was sentenced to 67 years in prison, of which she was to serve 27



Jobs for the girls
What are the odds on the first woman president of the Royal Society?
Salary: None.
Job description: The Royal Society, founded 354 years ago this week, is the UK's scientific academy and the president is the most prestigious scientific post in the country. Though it is an honorary post, the president speaks widely on the role of science and scientists, and is called on for advice by the Government.
Present incumbent: Sir Aaron Klug.
When will he go? In 2000 - it's a five-year post.
Any chance of a woman replacement? In theory it's possible - but the president is elected from the society's 1,200 fellows and only a paltry 40 of them are women. Just to make it a bit more difficult, the president is usually a Nobel prize winner and the only British woman to win a Nobel prize, Dorothy Hodgkin, is dead. But there are (or would be) some candidates: Julia Higgins, professor of chemistry at Imperial College, London, is one, as is Anne McLaren of the Wellcome Institute in Cambridge, who was the first ever woman officer of the Royal Society.
Why so few women in science? Traditionally analytical thinking has been considered a male attribute, says Polina Bayvel of the Department of Electronic Engineering at UCL. And apart from the history, scientific research is hard to combine with a family. It's a very demanding job, you have to be very driven and committed, and it isn't easy to sandwich with children.
Aren't women making any headway? Some. In my department, out of a staff of 30, three are women, Bayvel says. But there is a forward-thinking department, for real changes, the baton will need to be handed to the next generation of scientists and at least student figures are going up - Bayvel says 20 per cent of students at UCL are female.

Joanna Moorhead

passion of an affair - but it's more honest. She is your friend because you never have to pretend that you're nice, that you behave. While relationships with men come and go, your girlfriend is always there. So when the object of her desire is another woman, you feel as if you've been given your redundancy notice. Before Lily met Fiona, I reached parts of her that men couldn't. We dissected each other's irritations and frustrations. No concern was too insignificant. But when she fell for Fiona, she could have all that and an orgasm too.

didn't sleep with her. You shared beds, dipped the same spoon in ice-cream, borrowed each other's underwear. Close friendships with other women are like an unconscious affair - all the intimacy and none of the compromise. When Prince said "I'll be your girlfriend" to get a woman into the sack, he knew what he was talking about. "I'll be your girlfriend" would. Oh yeah I think so.

And after your mate has fallen into the arms of another woman, you're left nursing your jealousy. Rebecca met Jo at university. They were so inseparable that people

thought they were lovers. "We both had unrequited boyfriends," she explains. "We were the unit and boyfriends came and went."

That was until New Year's Eve when Jo ended up snogging another woman. "I was so embarrassed," Rebecca recalls. "I felt like a gossip." I ended up watching television on the sofa.

he tried to adapt, going to lesbian bars and clubs with a friend. "As men get thrown out, so do the bisexuals," she says. "Jo and I talked about her past as if she was

Kate for 14 years before she came out two years ago. "She turned up at my house with two Swedish-looking lesbians and said, 'I've been with the night before,'" she says. "My husband sat in the corner while I got to chat to the women who were so smart."

"I keep wanting to go to the Canary Bar to the gay night. I'm going to take off my wedding ring and see if anyone picks me up. I hope someone does. I get the pills taken out of me for being married more than the does for being gay. I'm doing the boring conventional thing. She's the modern woman."

Women

Side

An interview with BBC vice-chairman Baroness Young has raised one of TV's most esteemed producers to women's defence. Tony Garnett, executive producer of *The Cops* and *This Life*, and producer of *Coronation Street*, wrote to Baroness Young after reading that the BBC is looking for "an Archangel Gabriel" to replace Sir John Birt as director general. "He has to be a first-class manager of a large and complicated organisation," the Baroness said. "So no women need apply," Garnett writes. "Just as well for them to know in advance. Such frankness will avoid any disappointments." He tells *Sidelines*, but when I read it, I thought it was so outrageous that I responded immediately.

Advance on avoiding the office from the UK's leading independent spoken communications consultancy "the Aziz Corporation," includes saying you need to make an urgent phone call or are going to find the host, offering to go to the bar, introducing the bore to someone else, Billings, that sounds as much fun as watching glued hypernation or yawning without covering your mouth.

Sax, as the defining ingredient of a marriage, has been demoted. Far more important as a sign of matrimony is a woman who cooks and cleans, or so a judge ruled last week when the cohabitee of a man who died without making a will was granted a share of his estate. She had toiled over his domestic chores even though she didn't share his bed — and he was "eccentric" and refused to buy any labour-saving devices. Marriage is... a floor mop and pair of Marigolds.

Thanks to reader Mary Scanlon who answered *Sidelines*' query about male public wigs. Called merkins, she writes, they were popular when VD was treated with a short back and tides.

Raekha Prasad

Sins of the mothers

Her grandmother risked death in an act of terrorism that involved shooting five men. Her mother killed herself by leaping from a speeding car. And Irene Vilar has herself twice attempted suicide. **Nina Rauch** examines the maternal chains that have tied three generations together and torn them apart

On March 1 1994, Irene Vilar's grandmother, Lolita, wrapped herself in the Puerto Rican flag, climbed the stairs to the visitors' gallery and opened fire on the US Congress, shooting five men. It was an act of terrorism by a woman putting nation before family. She did it to protest American colonial policies in her island, because she wanted an English-speaking world to hear a Puerto Rican voice. Exactly 25 years later, on March 1 1977, Irene Vilar's mother, Gladys, committed suicide by throwing herself out of a speeding car, wrenching away from eight-year-old Irene who tore at her mother's black dress from the back seat and was left holding a triangle of black lace.

Lolita thought her actions would get her shot. Instead she was sentenced to 27 years in prison. She was allowed out of jail for a day and a half to attend her daughter's funeral. At her grandmother's funeral, Lolita again wrapped herself in her country's flag and the funeral became a national demonstration. "I don't know why, but I suddenly felt myself living in a climate of patriotic fervour," Vilar has said of that first meeting. "Suddenly Lolita takes off the flag and drapes it around some children who have come to greet her. When we get to the gate, Lolita tells the photographers that now they may take all the pictures they want. It is a matter of pride that her personal tragedy was a moment in the collective epic." Irene Vilar, who has the cut-glass beauty of her grandmother and

pregnant after a suicide attempt but, unlike either her mother or grandmother, she chose to abort her child. Lolita ("She never wanted me to call her grandmas") has refused to talk to Vilar since her book came out. "At first Lolita supported what I was doing," Vilar recalls. "But she thought it was going to be a testimonial to her affairs caused much of her mother's pain. When difficult times came, he didn't give me up to my aunt — and I had all these aunts trying to take me. He was there and I would wake up at night and he would be in the bathroom, sewing my dress and doing things like that. Clumsy, awkward, but he was there."

Vilar's father was the first person to whom she showed the book. "Trene," he said, "it is the truth." This is life-blood to Vilar because her grandmother does not accept that Vilar's mother committed suicide. The death, she says, was an accident, a suicide attempt, one of many, another cry for help.

For Vilar, this is intolerable. "Do you understand," she says, "that 83 per cent of all suicides happen this way? That's what suicide is. It is only 18 per cent who commit suicide by shooting themselves through the head or jumping off a high building. Those are exceptions. Most suicides are little things that happen the third, fourth time. And if you don't realise that, you become an accomplice. Many people fade away in front of you and you look the other way, saying 'If they really meant it, they would do it the definite way'."

A *Washington Post* article about the book, published by Granta, in order for £2.99 plus 60p UK postage, telephone 0200 000 102 or send a cheque payable to Guardian Culture Shop, 260 Western Ave, London W8 8EE.

Other women

When your best friend comes out, where does that leave you, asks

Raekha Prasad



PHOTOGRAPH: LAURENCE JAMES-PAGE

Two 20-year-olds died tragically from carbon monoxide poisoning over the weekend. Ed Walker warns that the gas also has less well-known but insidious long-term effects



Suffering from flu... chronic exhaustion may result from carbon monoxide poisoning. (Photo: Alan Wolf)

Killing me softly

If you're suffering from tiredness, general malaise and headaches, you may well end up these days with the diagnosis of myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Because there is no specific test for either, it is what's known as a "diagnosis of exclusion".

But a recent survey of 77 people with ME-like symptoms discovered a much more straightforward and all too real cause in some cases. The survey, conducted by the charity Carbon Monoxide Support (COS), showed that ME was one of the most common misdiagnoses given to people affected by long-term exposure to carbon monoxide.

The gas is produced from the incomplete combustion of fossil fuel — oil, gas, wood or coal — and any device burning these fuels is a potential source, if the chimney or flue is not working properly.

Everyone knows how poisonous this gas is, but few realise that poisoning can be chronic, and not immediately fatal. Unfortunately, many in the medical profession are just as ignorant as everyone else. Debbie Davis, who runs COS, was poisoned several years ago. Thanks to her, carbon monoxide stories have found their way into episodes of *Coronation Street*. Casualty and the subject, she says.

Davis's symptoms began in late 1992 after she had taken over the tenancy on a council house in Leeds, and was told a "full gas and electrical safety check" had been carried out. She immediately

began to suffer headaches, nausea, dizziness and confusion. After one bout of vomiting and abdominal pain, she was diagnosed with a gall-bladder problem. Her GP at the time assured her that her symptoms were not due to CO exposure, but over the following months her daily routine was to get up, start the housework, get tired, lie down, be sick, and go to sleep. She would put the lounge chair in even when she dozed, exhausted, on the sofa.

In April 1993, her husband began some renovation work, and discovered a completely non-functioning flue for the lounge fire and kitchen boiler. Both had virtually collapsed

and were full of soot and rubble. When the defects were remedied, says Davis, the worst of her symptoms began to subside, but even now she believes the cumulative effects of seven months' exposure has left her permanently damaged. She suffers memory loss, can no longer drive and has only enough energy to last a few hours a day.

If you wanted to come up with the ideal poison, you would be hard pressed to better carbon monoxide. It slowly anaesthetises its victims. The main reason that it is so poisonous is that human blood has a 240-fold greater attraction for it than for oxygen. People being poisoned with it don't even look unwell, as blood contaminated with the toxin turns bright pink, rather than the blue-grey colour of some-one suffocating from any other cause. A victim with acute, life-threatening exposure may appear quite well until they

'You would be hard pressed to come up with a better poison. Tasteless and odourless, it slowly anaesthetises'

quite well until they

Positive future... one man's dramatic reprieve from Aids 9

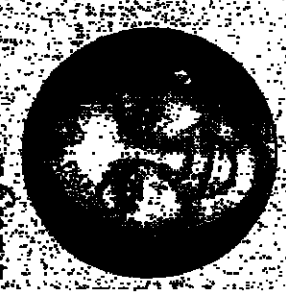


Edited by Hilary Bower

Bloodhound... a new test being developed in the US may spot cancer before any symptoms appear. Page 8

Case Notes

Maya



What's the first illness you can remember and how old were you? A touch of bronchitis at about three years old.

When did you last see your doctor? About four months ago for a check-up.

What kind of patient are you? An attentive one.

What's the most pain you've ever been in? When my first love and I broke up.

What's your biggest vice? Caring.

Have you given anything up for your health? Certain foods.

How do you deal with stress? Read, meditate, just chill out.

What alternative therapy have you tried? (Did it help?) Yoga — absolutely. But travelling makes it difficult to stick with it.

In there any illness you particularly fear? Anything you fear, you live.

What do you consider the biggest medical breakthrough this century? Eating for the body. A change in diet can work miracles.

And your secret for good health? Giving up certain foods, along with 18 minutes' minimum of hearty laughter a day, giving thanks for those you love and just going with the flow.

Maya recently took over the role of Maya in the Broadway hit musical, *Pink*, now at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London. Interview: Sarah Marshall

Blood simple

liver. But sustaining during the

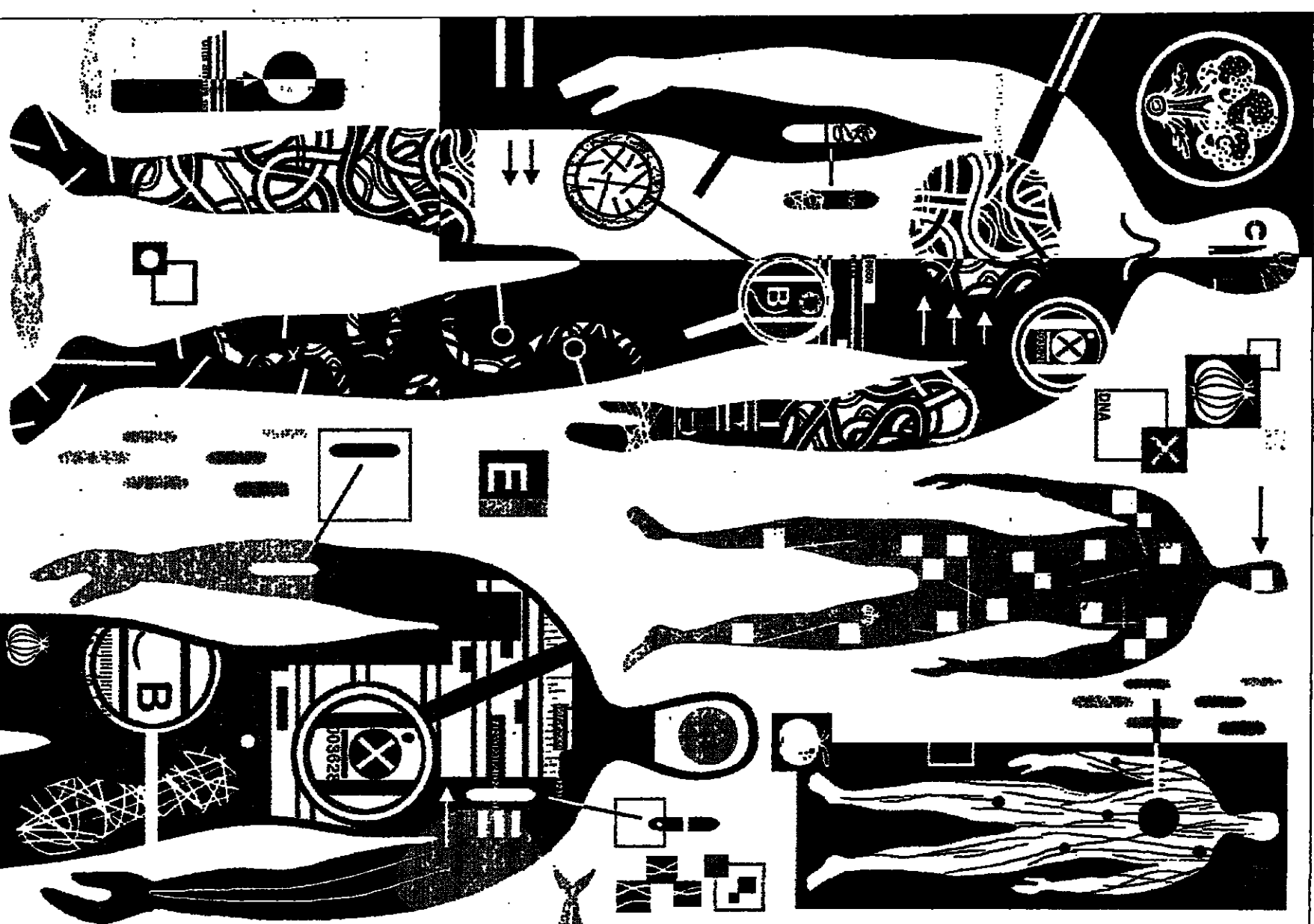
מסלול קריירה (Career Path) – מסלול קריירה

the year. But maintaining a happy occasion into a depressing

OVER: I DON'T QUINK ANYMORE. WHAT SOCIAL (REAL

and conceive/several) after all. I cleared two meters. Next I had a Port-cocktail

SEW FILTH: IMPROVE IN DAYS.



how I'll see in the millennium,
my funeral. Now I'm wondering
if you could give me a premonition?

clear two metres. Next I had a Port-cocktail savv with improve in days.	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100
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Back from the brink... new drugs have made the phrase "living with Aids" a reality for Tony

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANKENSON

So here I am today, surprised to find myself in Francisco very much alive. I'm not as I was before. I use a walking stick, am partially sighted, and have physical and mental scars. Jerry, my husband, gave me two pairs of glasses, a hand lens, sometimes a rubber tepee, and most important of all, a pocketful of pills — to a day, not counting anti-dioxides and painkillers. But these are minor inconveniences compared to what has gone before. My life has been transformed. Hospital visits are down to once or twice a month, there are no more eye injections, and my CD4 count has reached a comfortable 700. I am studying GCSE Spanish at college, and we have booked a trip to the Far East in the New Year. I have started thinking about what to do for the Millennium and I haven't been to a funeral for over a year.

Will it last? No one can say. The drug has unpleasant side-effects and not much more will emerge. HIV is often at devastating levels

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